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the ODYSSEY
MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS™
THE ODYSSEY
ADAPTED FROM THE CLASSIC BY HOMER
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STAN LEE presents

THE ODYSSEY

By Homer

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Very little is known about Homer. Theories proposed over the centuries include him being a blind man led about the countryside by a small boy and the suggestion that Homer is not a man at all, but a kind of "shop name" given to works produced by various Greek poets of the period. One theory even went so far as to propose that the works attributed to "Homer" actually merely appeared in the minds of all the people of Greece, making "Homer" a collective consciousness rather than a man.

Various theories aside, it is today accepted that Homer was indeed a man, a poet. The inspirations for his great and rousing epics of Greek Heroism were probably assorted oral tales told in and around Greece. For a long while, during the 18th & 19th centuries, many scholars proposed that THE ODYSSEY and THE ILIAD were merely a written patchwork collection of these many oral tales rather than original works. However, these theories too have been accepted as erroneous in light of modern evidence collected on ancient Greek society.

While little is actually documented about the man, certain assumptions can be made about him from his works. Tales of Greek heroism and the Trojan war were common by Homers time, as was the epic literary form — but Homer selected only certain episodes and wove them together, breathing life into his characters, reflecting specific themes. His poetic comparisons are drawn from his own observations of humble working people in ancient Greece. It also can be noted, again showing personal attitude, that he makes the Olympian gods important characters in his stories, ignoring completely the various "old gods" worshipped by much earlier Greeks.

Whoever Homer is, whatever his personal philosophies, his great epics, THE ILIAD and THE ODYSSEY have inspired young and old alike for nearly 3,000 years!

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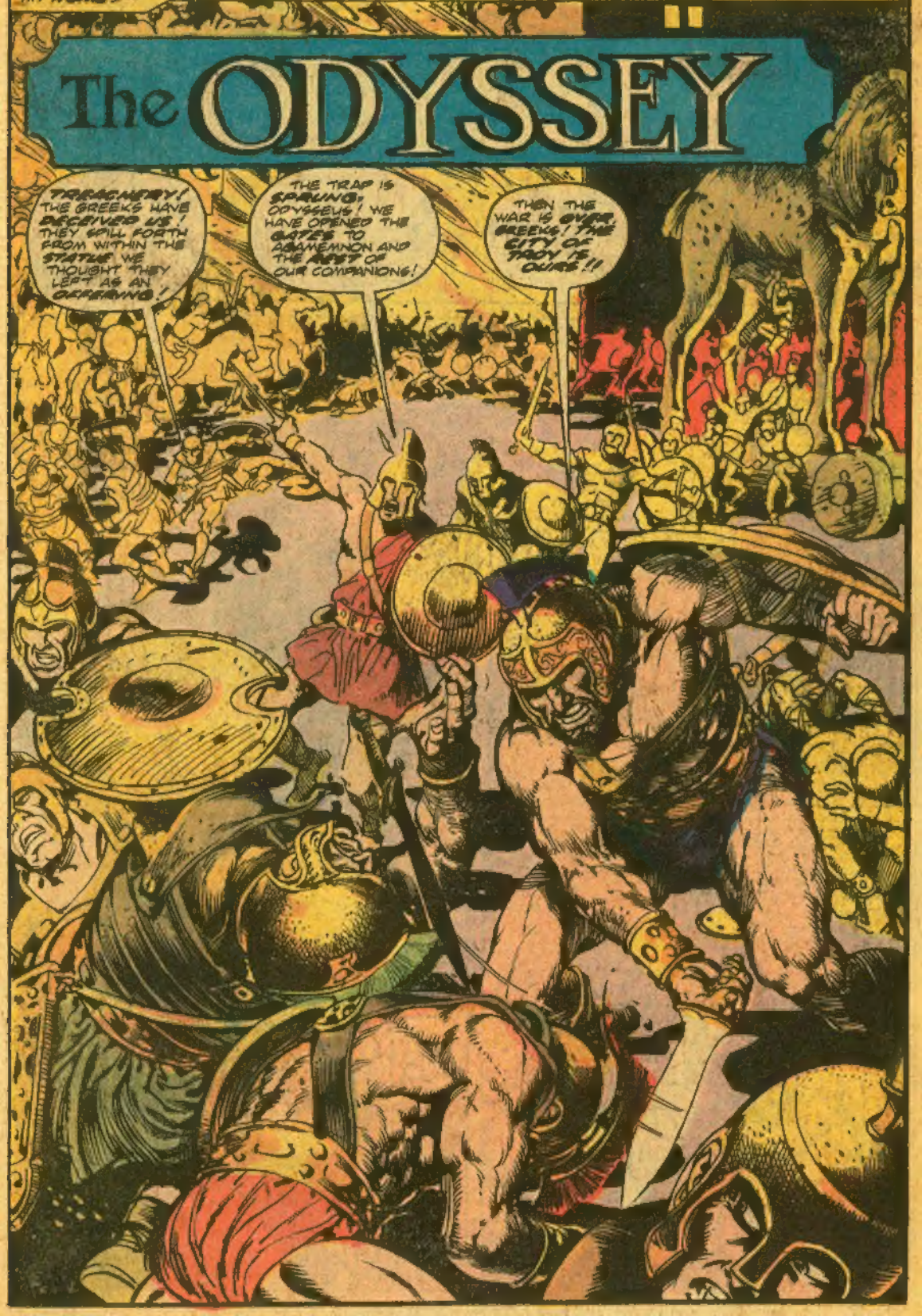
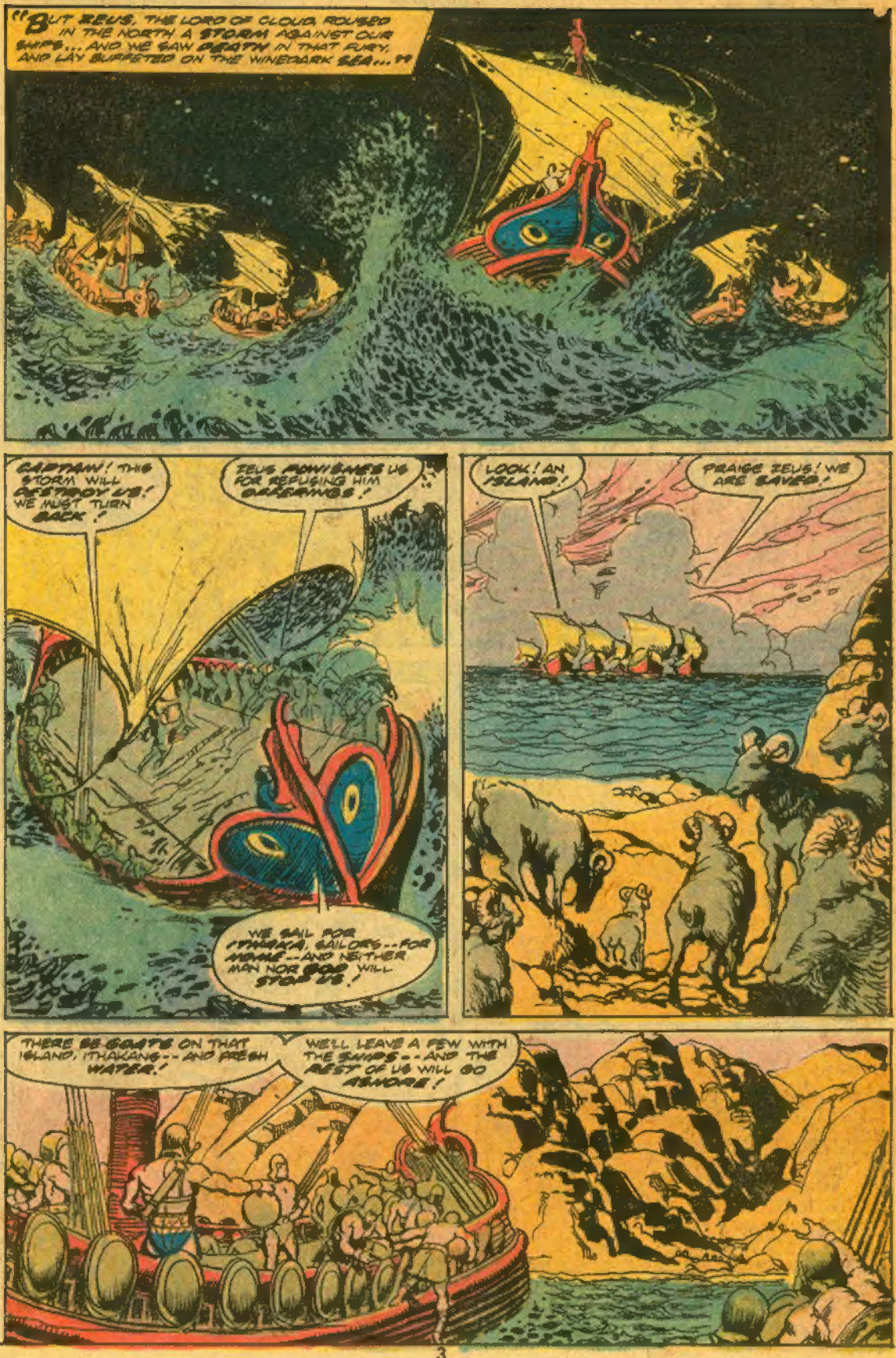
"WHAT SHALL I SAY FIRST--AND WHAT SHALL I KEEP UNTIL THE END? I AM ODYSSEUS--LAERTES' SON--AND MEN HOLD ME FORMIDABLE IN PEACE AND WAR. MASTER MARINER, RAIDER OF CITIES, THE GREAT TACTICIAN--THESE AND OTHER NAMES HAVE I BORNE WITH ME ON MY LONG WAY FROM THE BLOOD-SOAKED PLAINS OF WAR TO MY BELOVED PEAKS OF ITHAKA--MY HOME!"

II

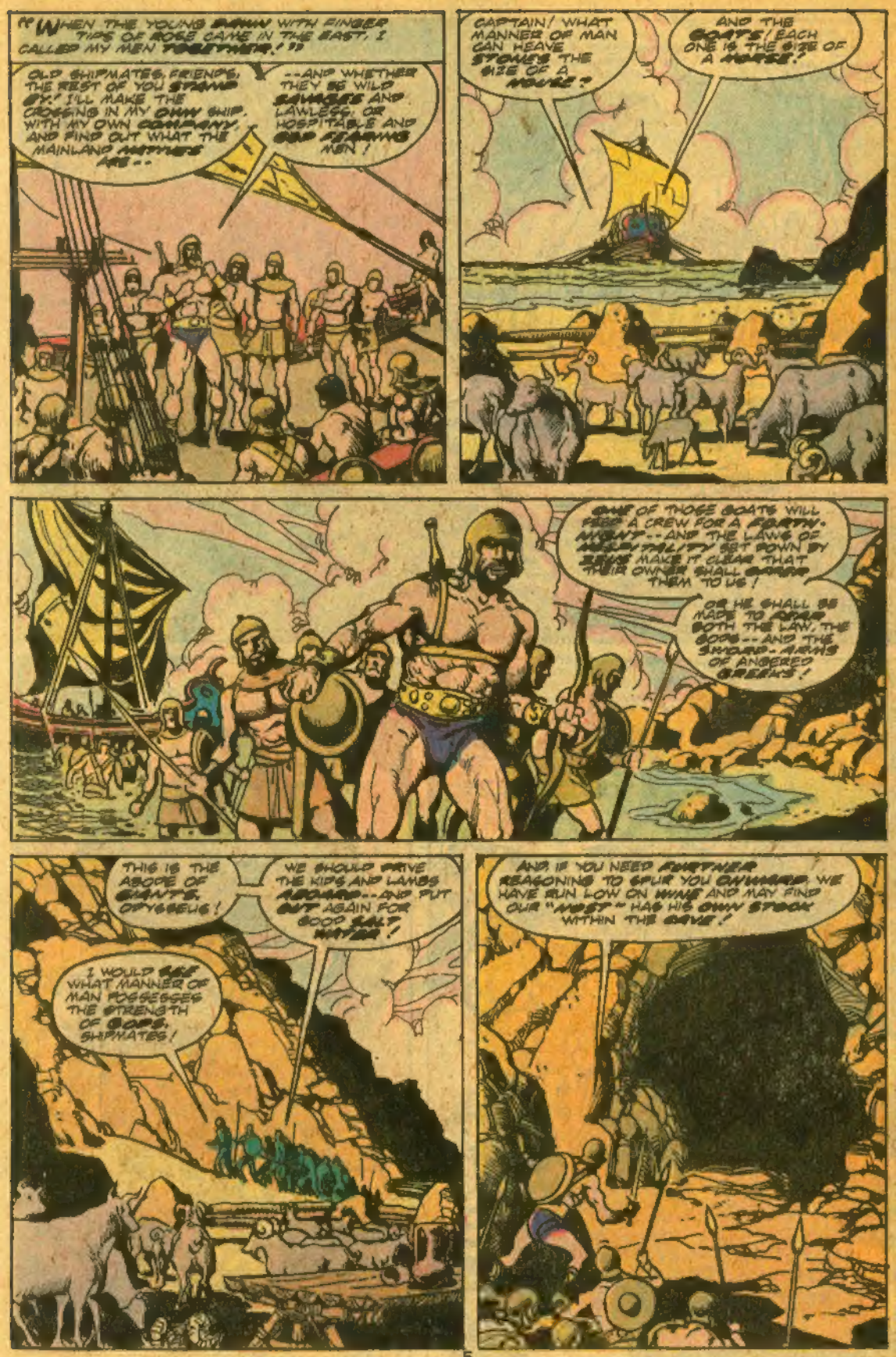
The ODYSSEY


TREACHERY! THE GREEKS HAVE DECEIVED US! THEY SPILL FORTH FROM WITHIN THE STATUE WE THOUGHT THEY LEFT AS AN OFFERING!
THE TRAP IS SPRUNG, ODYSSEUS! WE HAVE OPENED THE GATES TO AGAMEMNON AND THE REST OF OUR COMPANIONS!
THEN THE WAR IS OVER, GREEKS! THE CITY OF TROY IS OURS!!

"THE WAR HAD LASTED TEN YEARS--WASTED FOR A WOMAN! MANY GREEKS HAD SHED THEIR BLOOD ON THE PLAIN OUTSIDE TROY--AND ALL WERE NOW EAGER TO TURN THEIR FACE HOMEWARD!"
THE MEN ARE RESTLESS, MY LORD AGAMEMNON! THEY HAVE ALL RECEIVED THEIR SHARE OF THE WOMEN AND SPOILS--AND THEY WOULD SAIL FOR HOME!
ODYSSEUS, WHAT OF MY BROTHER? WHY DO I NOT SEE MENELAUS AND HIS MEN AMONG THOSE ASSEMBLED?
HE SAILED WITH THE SUNRISE, MY LORD--WITH HIS FLEET OF SWIFT--SILVER--SAILED!
CURSE THE DAY THE GODDESS ATHENA PUT LUST FOR THY BROTHER'S WIFE IN THE HEART OF PARIS!
TROY HAS FALLEN THE HOUSE OF PRIAM, HE AND HIS PROUD SONS LIE DEAD--HIS CITY IN ASHES.
YET ALSO LIE MANY GREEKS! ACHILLES--PATROKLOS--ANTILOKHOS--ALL SLAIN.
BUT IT IS OVER. WE MUST OFFER SACRIFICE TO ATHENA--AND HOPE WE ARE NOT TOO LATE TO APPEASE HER RAGE OVER THE DESTRUCTION OF A RACE SHE HELD DEAR ABOVE ALL OTHERS.
I LOVE THE GODDESS, AS SHE WELL KNOWS; MY KING--BUT I'VE NOT SEEN MY WIFE AND SON FOR TEN LONG YEARS.
ATHENA HAS ANSWERED ME IN THE MIST--
--AND I PRAY SHE WILL SO GO AGAIN. I TELL HER I'LL SACRIFICE A TWELFTH OF MY SHARE OF THE SPOILS, AGAMEMNON--
--AFTER I'VE RETURNED TO ITHACA!


"BUT ZEUS, THE LORD OF CLOUD, ROUSED IN THE NORTH A STORM AGAINST OUR SHIPS... AND WE SAW DEATH IN THAT FURY, AND LAY BUFFETED ON THE WINEDARK SEA..."
CAPTAIN! THIS STORM WILL DESTROY US! WE MUST TURN BACK!
ZEUS NOW SAVES US FOR REFUSING HIM SACRIFICE!
WE SAIL FOR ITHAKA, SAILORS--FOR HOME--AND NEITHER MAN NOR GOD WILL STOP US!
LOOK! AN ISLAND!
PRAISE ZEUS! WE ARE SAVED!
THERE BE GOATS ON THAT ISLAND, ITHAKANS--AND FRESH WATER!
WE'LL LEAVE A FEW WITH THE SHIPS--AND THE REST OF US WILL GO ASHORE!

"SO STRANGERS WERE WE FROM OUR CREWS'LL IN THE STORM..."
"...WE GAVE NO THOUGHT TO WHY NONE OF US HAD SEEN THE ISLAND UNTIL OUR BOWS SCRAPED HER SHORE!"
HEAR THE BLEATING, LADS? OUR DINNERS LIES AHEAD!
YET WHERE ARE THE SHEPHERDS? THE HERDS GRAZE AS IF USED TO BEING ALONE!
WHY QUESTION GOOD FORTUNE, SHIPMATE? THE MEAT IS PLENTIFUL--
--AND I WOULD CHALLENGE ANY MAN WHO THOUGHT THIS DAY TO DENY US!
"HEAVEN GAVE US GAME A-PLENTY! AND FAT FOR EVERY SHIP IN MY SQUADRON WHO CARES TELL TO BE SHARED."
"SO THERE ALL DAY, UNTIL THE SUN WENT DOWN! WE MADE OUR FEAST ON MEAT, AND WINE FROM THE SHIPS!"
"YET STILL THE QUESTION OF WHERE THE INHABITANTS OF THE ISLAND WERE WENT UNANSWERED."
I SAW A CAVE IN THE CLIFFS ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE COVE-- WITH SMOKE RISING FROM IT!
TOMORROW WE SHALL SEE WHO--OR WHAT--BUILDS FIRES ON THIS ISLAND!


"WHEN THE YOUNG DAWN WITH FINGER TIPS OF ROSE CAME IN THE EAST, I CALLED MY MEN TOGETHER."
OLD SHIPMATES, FRIENDS, THE REST OF YOU STAND BY! I'LL MAKE THE CROSSING IN MY OWN SHIP, WITH MY OWN COMPANY, AND FIND OUT WHAT THE MAINLAND NATIVES ARE--
--AND WHETHER THEY BE WILD SAVAGES AND LAWLESS, OR HOSPITABLE AND GOD FEARING MEN!
CAPTAIN! WHAT MANNER OF MAN CAN HEAVE STONES THE SIZE OF A HOUSE?
AND THE GOATS! EACH ONE IS THE SIZE OF A HORSE!
ONE OF THOSE GOATS WILL FEED A CREW FOR A FORTNIGHT--AND THE LAWS OF HOSPITALITY SET DOWN BY ZEUS MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEIR OWNER SHALL SUPPLY THEM TO US!
OR HE SHALL BE MADE TO FEAR BOTH THE LAW, THE GODS--AND THE SWORD-ARMS OF ANGERED GREEKS!
THIS IS THE ABODE OF GIANTS, ODYSSEUS!
WE SHOULD DRIVE THE KIDS AND LAMBS ABOARD--AND PUT OUT AGAIN FOR GOOD SALT WATER!
I WOULD SEE WHAT MANNER OF MAN POSSESSES THE STRENGTH OF GODS, SHIPMATES!
AND, IF YOU NEED ANOTHER REASONING TO SPUR YOU ONWARDS, WE HAVE RUN LOW ON WINE AND MAY FIND OUR "HOST" HAS HIS OWN STOCK WITHIN THE CAVE!

BY ALL THE GODS!!
WHAT MANNER OF MONSTER HAVE WE STUMBLED UPON!
STRANGERS. WHO ARE YOU?
C-CAPTAIN! WHAT IN ZEUS NAME...?
WE ARE FROM TROY-- ACHAEANS BLOWN OFF-COURSE!
IT WAS OUR LOT TO COME HERE--AND I ENTREAT YOU TO HAVE A CARE FOR THE GODS' COURTESY! ZEUS AVENGES THE UNOFFENDING GUEST!
YOU ARE A FOOL, MAN! I CARE NOTHING FOR THE RULES OF ZEUS AND THE SIMPERING OLYMPIANS!

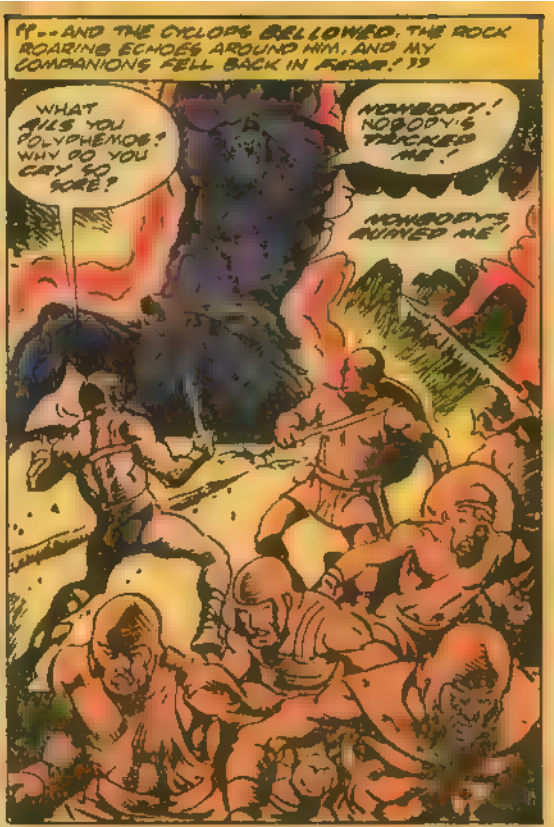
I AM POLYPHEMOS--THE CYCLOPS!
SON OF POSEIDON, EARTH-SHAKER, LORD OF THE SEAS!!
AND YOU, GREEKS--ARE MINE!!
ARRGHHH!
AIIEEEEEE!
"I'M ONE STRIDE THE MONSTER CLUTCHES AT MY COMPANIONS, CATCHING AND SMASHING THEM AGAINST THE ROOF AND FLOOR!"
SCYLLA--MAKE FOR THE HEAD OF THE CAVE!
RUN--OR ALL IS LOST!!

E-CAPTAIN! OUR COMPANION... HE'S...
THEY ARE BEHIND HELP, CREATOS--AND I FEAR IT WILL COME OUR TURN SOON ENOUGH.

HOW I ACHE TO FEEL MY BLADE STAB DEEP INTO THE MONSTER'S HEART!
BUT IF I SUCCEEDED IN SLAYING HIM... THERE IS NOT A MAN AMONG US CAPABLE OF MOVING THE HUGE STONE WITH WHICH HE HAS SEALED THE CAVE'S ENTRANCE!
SO WE ARE LEFT TO CHOOSE BETWEEN STARVATION--OR HORRIBLE DEATH AT THE HANDS OF THE CYCLOPS!

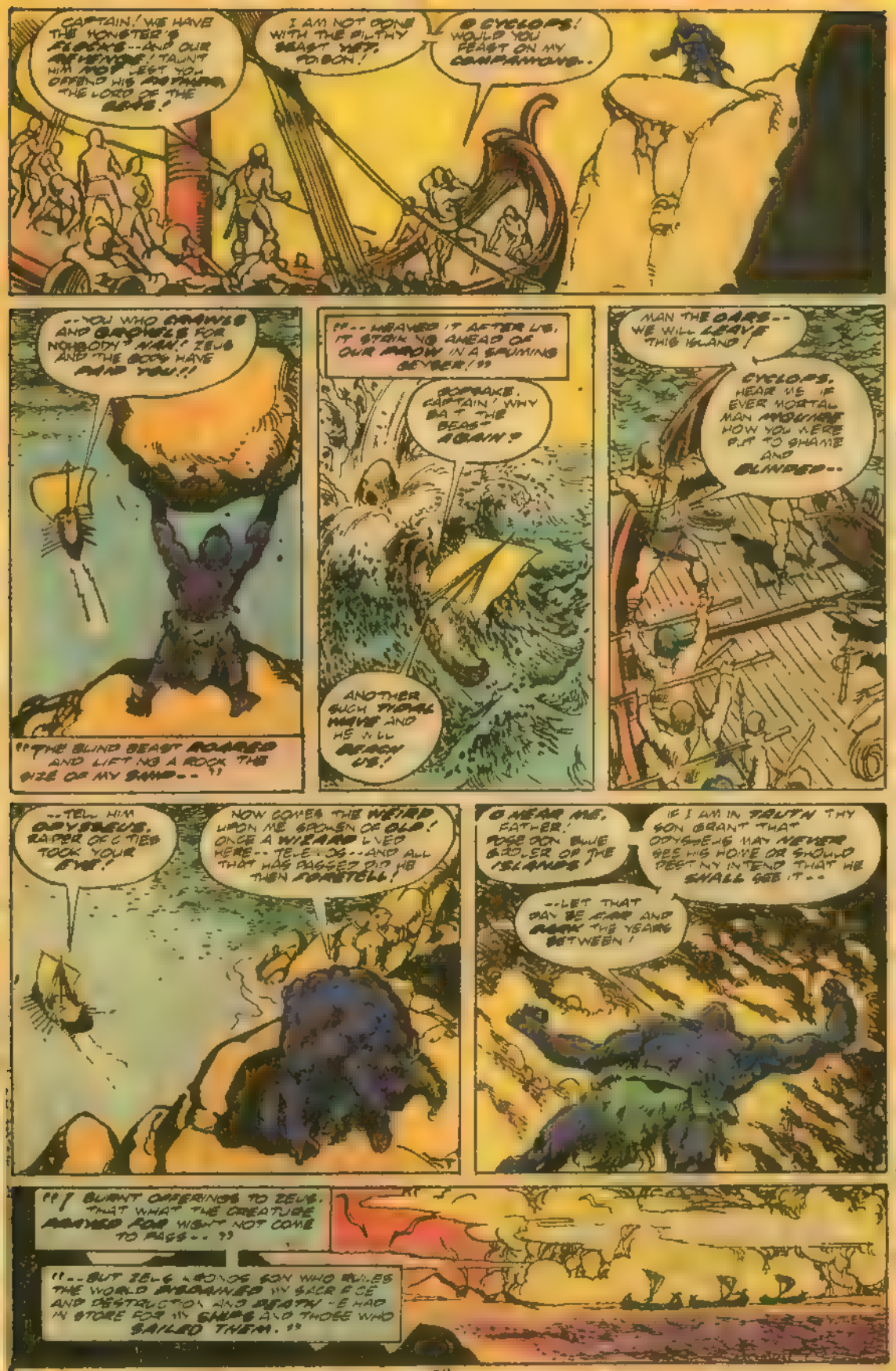
"THE NEXT MORNING THE CYCLOPS ROSE TO TEND HIS FLOCKS, REVEALING THE ENTRANCE BEHIND HIM."
ODYSSEUS! HE IS LEAVING!
THEN WE ACT! ITHAKANS! THAT STRAKE AND THE MONSTER'S OWN FIRE WILL BE OUR SALVATION!
WHAT MOANS CAN WE PLACE IN THAT, ODYSSEUS
ANY HOPE IS BETTER THAN BECOMING DINNER FOR THE SEA-LORD'S SON!
HEAVE THE TIP OF THE STAKE INTO THE FLAMES--AND AWAIT MY SIGNAL!
THE MONSTER! HE RETURNS!
"THE CREW AND ONCE AGAIN, I MASTERED MY FEAR AND FACED THE MONSTER--A GOATSKIN OF THE BEST WINE OF GREECE HELD ALOFT OVER MY HEAD!"
CYCLOPS, TRY SOME WINE! HERE'S LIQUOR TO WASH DOWN YOUR SCRAPS OF MAN!
I HAD MEANT IT AS AN OFFERING, IF YOU WOULD HELP US HOME--NOW I OFFER IT TO PLEAD FOR OUR LIVES!
I WILL DRINK YOUR WINE, LITTLE MAN--AND IN RETURN I WILL MAKE YOU A GIFT! HOW ARE YOU CALLED, MAN?
REMEMBER THE GIFT YOU HAVE PROMISED ME, MONSTER! I AM CALLED... NOBODY!
NOBODY'S MY MEAT THEN... AFTER I EAT HIS FRIENDS! OTHERS COME FIRST--
--THEN NOBODY! THERE'S A... NOBLE GIFT...
NOW...
FILTHY CREATURE! YOU HAVE DRUNK YOURSELF TO DESTRUCTION!
YOU CANNOT SEE THE SPIKE MONSTER--BUT IT SLOWS AND, THIRSTING FOR YOUR BLOOD!
NOW, COMPANIONS! SHOW THIS CREATURE THAT HE CANNOT FEAST ON GREEKS--

-- AND ESCAPE REVENGE!!
"THE GLOWING-HOT SPIKE DROVE DEEP IN THE MONSTER'S CRATER EYE--"

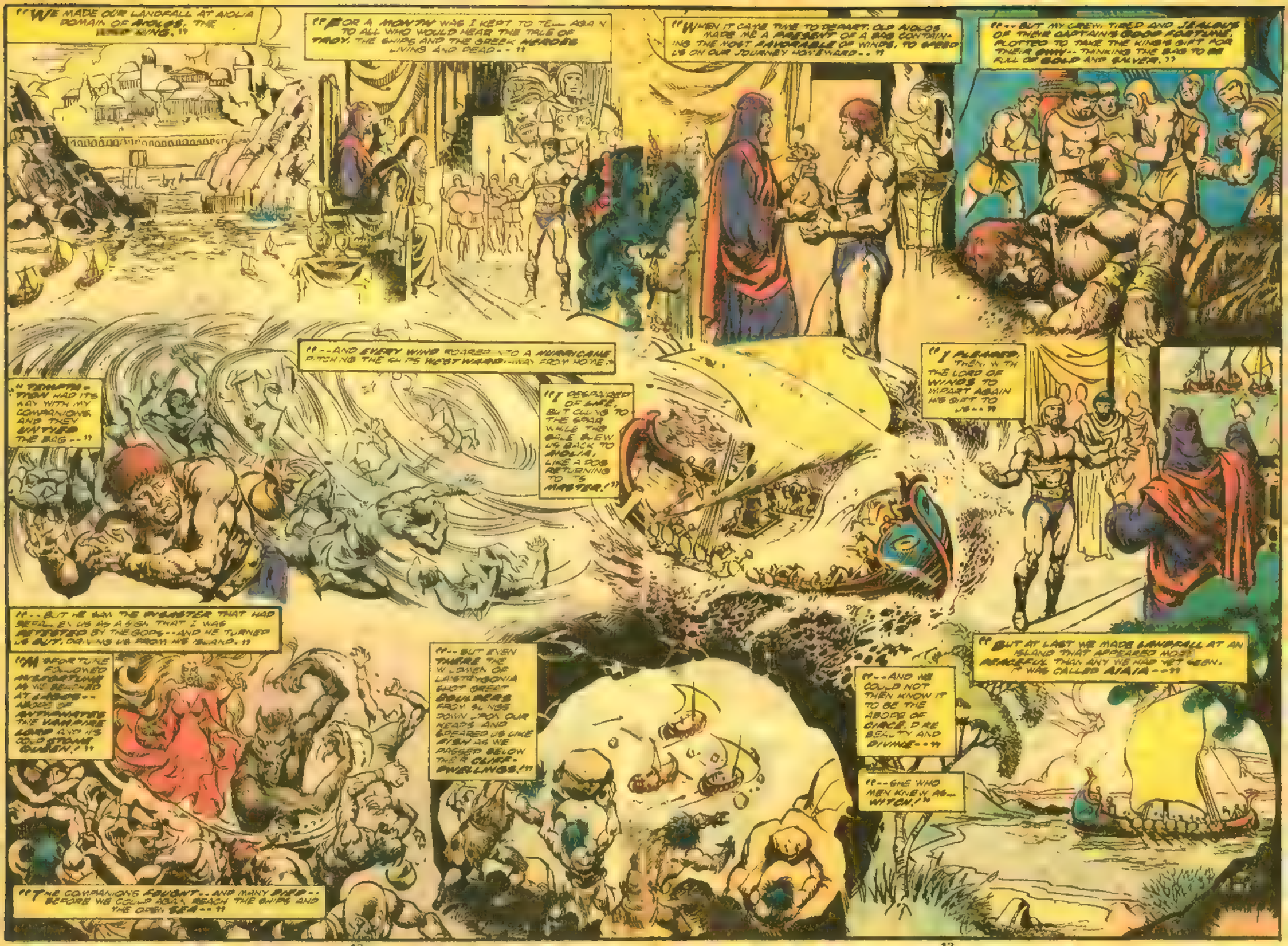

"--AND THE CYCLOPS BELLOWED. THE ROCK ROARING ECHOES AROUND HIM, AND MY COMPANIONS FELL BACK IN FEAR."
WHAT AILS YOU POLYPHEMOS? WHY DO YOU CRY SO, SORE?
NOBODY! NOBODY'S TRICKED ME!
NOBODY'S RUINED ME!

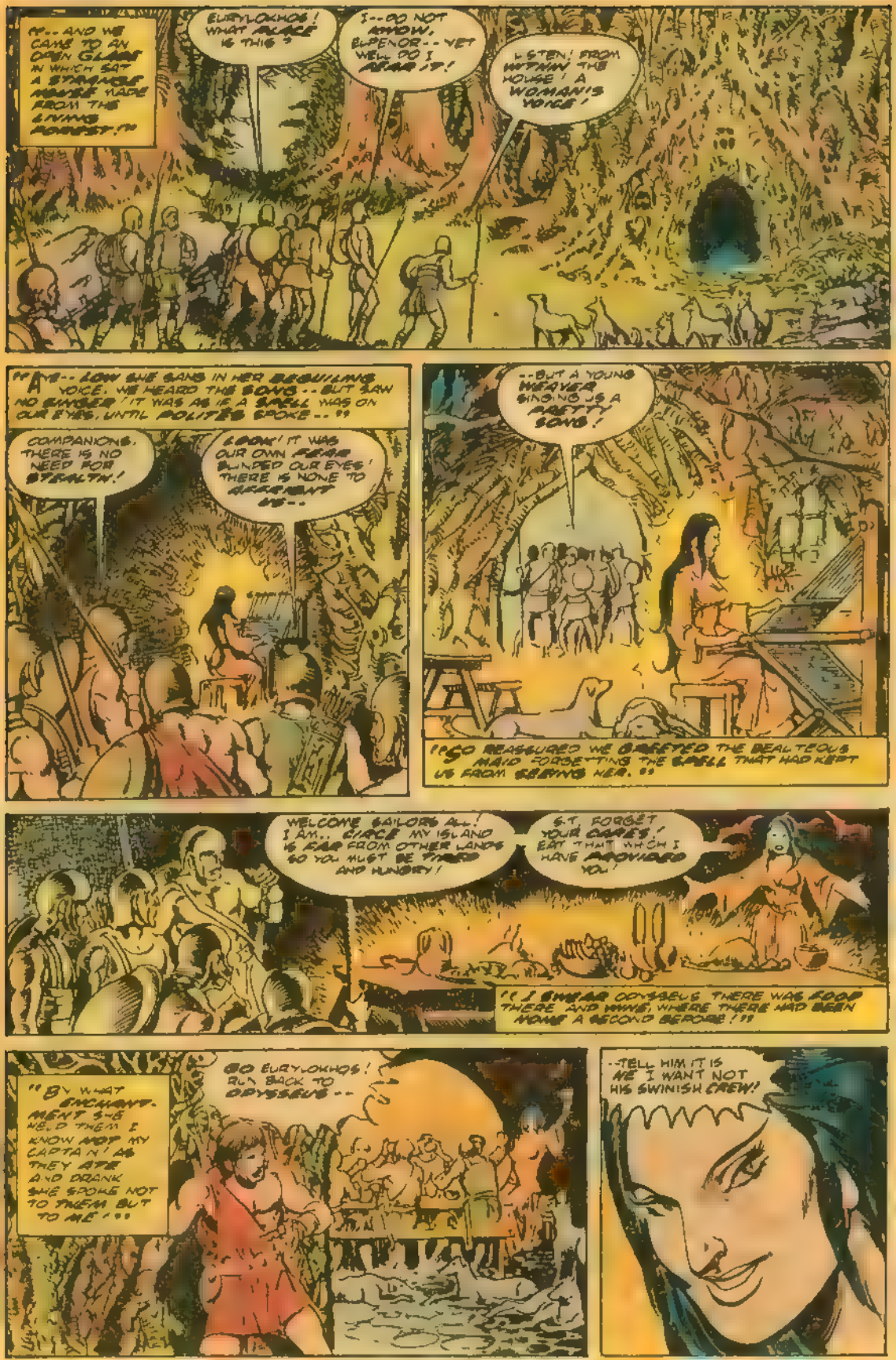
WELL, THEN, IF NOBODY HAS PLAYED YOU ALL -- YOU CAN HAVE NOTHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT!
CEASE YOUR BELLOWING! IT IS NO USE IN PAIN GIVEN BY GREAT ZEUS. LET IT BE YOUR FATHER, POSE DON LODD TO WHOM YOU PRAY!

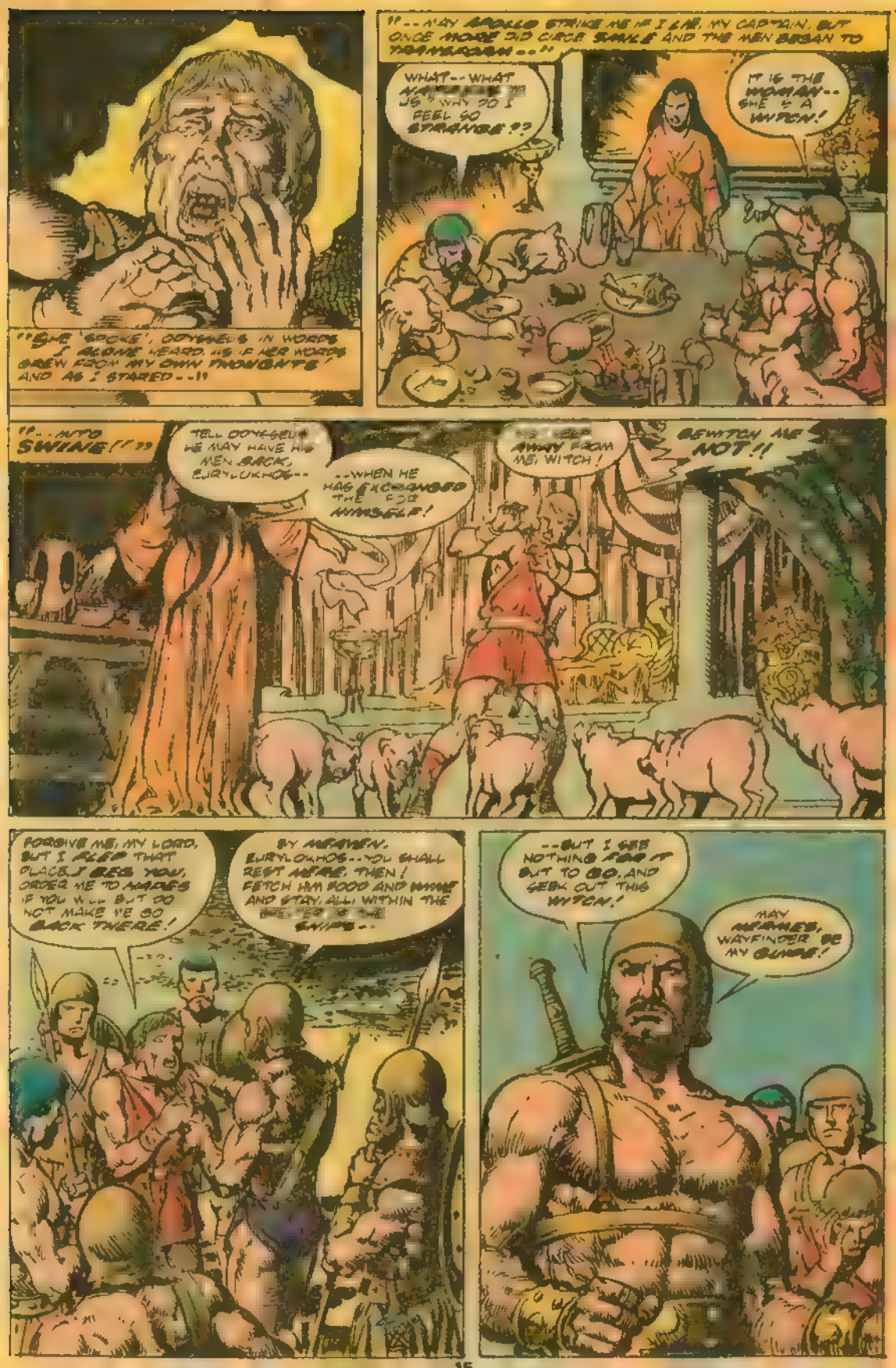
"BLINDED AND SICK WITH RAGE, THE CYCLOPS HAD RUN HIS HUGE HANDS OVER THE LENGTH OF THE CAVE ALL NIGHT SEARCHING FOR "NOBODY" THAT HE MIGHT BE REVENGED UPON HIM."
"BUT I HAD ORDERED THE COMPANIONS TO CLING TO THE THICK WOOL BENEATH THE RAMS, AND SO ESCAPED... WE PASSED THROUGH THE FLOCK'S THE NEXT MORNING."
SWEET COUSIN [redacted] HAD YOU BUT VOICE AND BRAIN TO TELL ME WHERE NOBODY MAY BE NOW, DODGING ALL MY FURY!
NOBODY WILL NOT GET OUT ALIVE! THAT CARRION ROGUE -- POLYPHEMOS WILL DRINK HIS BLOOD, THIS I SWEAR!

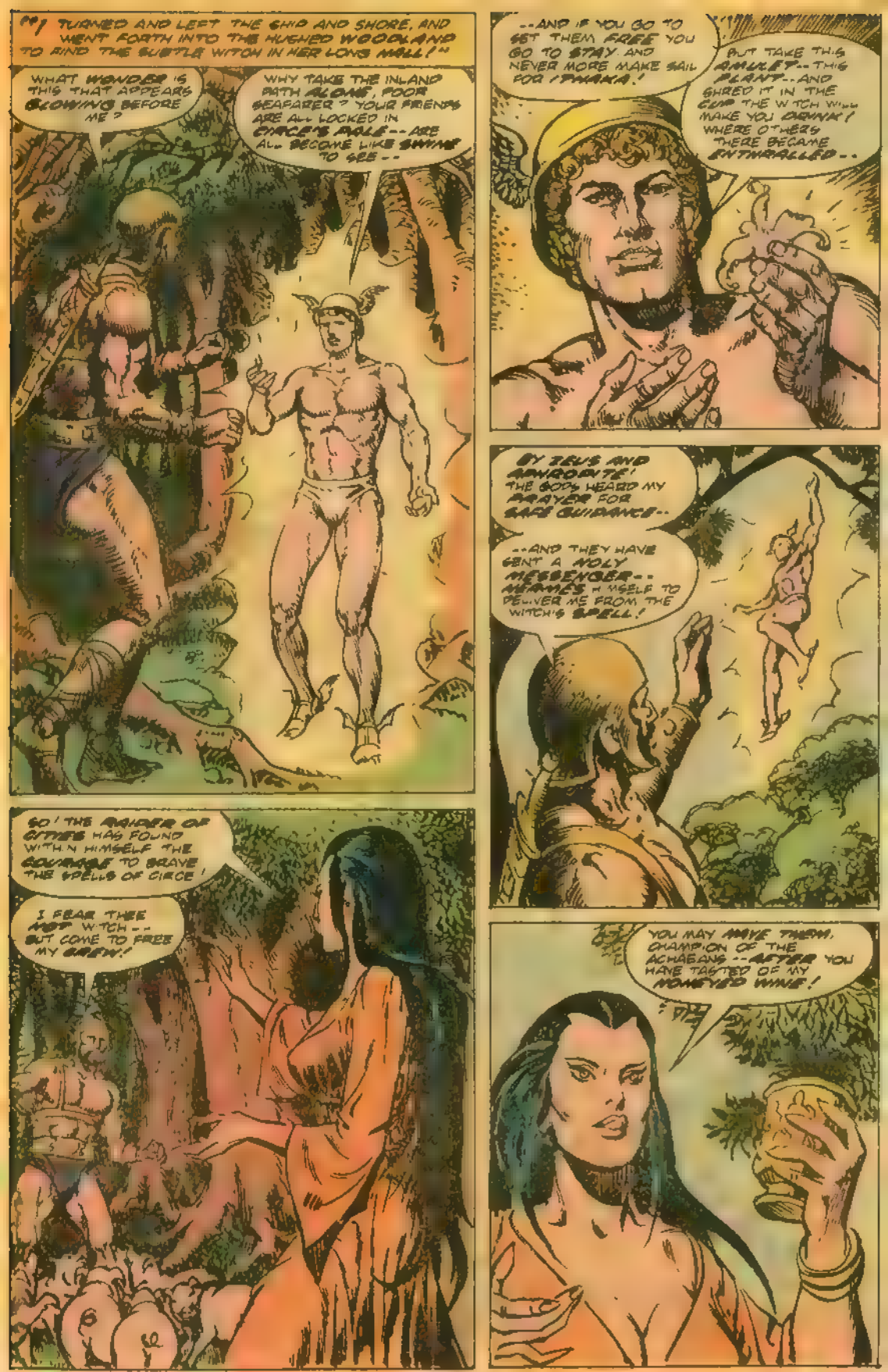

CAPTAIN! WE HAVE THE MONSTER'S EYE--AND OUR REVENGE! TAUNT HIM NOT LEST YOU OFFEND HIS MOTHER, THE LORD OF THE SEAS!
I AM NOT DONE WITH THE FILTHY BEAST YET. TO BOOT!
O CYCLOPS! WOULD YOU FEAST ON MY COMPANIONS..
--YOU WHO CRAWLED AND GROVELED FOR NOBODY! MAN! ZEUS AND THE GODS HAVE HAD YOU!!
"THE BLIND BEAST ROARED AND LIFT NO A ROCK THE SIZE OF MY SHIP--"
"--HEAVED IT AFTER US, IT STRUCK NO AHEAD OF OUR PROW IN A SPUMING GEYSER!"
BOSTAKE, CAPTAIN! WHY DO THE BEAST AGAIN?
ANOTHER SUCH TOTAL MISS AND HE'LL REACH US!
MAN THE OARS-- WE WILL LEAVE THIS ISLAND!
CYCLOPS, HEAR ME IF EVER MORTAL MAN ANOINT HOW YOU WERE PUT TO SHAME AND BLINDED--
--TELL HIM ODYSSEUS, RAPER OF CITIES TOOK YOUR EYE!
NOW COMES THE WEIRD UPON ME SPOKEN OF OLD! ONCE A WIZARD LIVED HERE-- TE-E-RE-SI-AS--AND ALL THAT HAS PASSED DID HE THEN FORETELL!
O HEAR ME, FATHER! POSEIDON BLUE GOD OF THE ISLANDS!
--LET THAT DAY BE FAR AND AWAY THE YEARS BETWEEN!
IF I AM IN TRUTH THY SON GRANT THAT ODYSSEUS MAY NEVER SEE HIS HOME OR SHOULD FATE NY INTEND THAT HE SHALL SEE IT--
"I BURNT OFFERINGS TO ZEUS, THAT WHAT THE CREATURE PROMISED FOR WISHT NOT COME TO PASS--"
"--BUT ZEUS HONOR SON WHO RULES THE WORLD PROMISED MY SACRIFICE AND DESTRUCTION AND DEATH HE HAD IN STORE FOR MY SHIPS AND THOSE WHO SAILED THEM."

"DISASTER WAS NOT LONG IN STRIKING FOR, NO SOONER WERE WE OUT TO SEA, THEN THE WATERS BECAME LIKE POLISHED GLASS AND OUR SAILS HUNG MOCKINGLY SLACK."
"WE WERE BECALMED AND CURSED STILLNESS ENVELOPED US--"
"--AND, ALTHOUGH THE WINDS BREATHED FULL AGAIN IN [illegible] DAYS TIME, AND WE WERE UNDER WAY ONCE MORE, IT WAS ENOUGH TO UNDERSCORE THE EVER CREEPING DREAD THAT WAS BEGINNING TO POSSESS MY CREW."
I PRAY THESE WINDS CARRY US TO FRIENDLY SHORE--
--LEST I BE LEFT WITH NAUGHT BUT MADMEN FOR A CREW

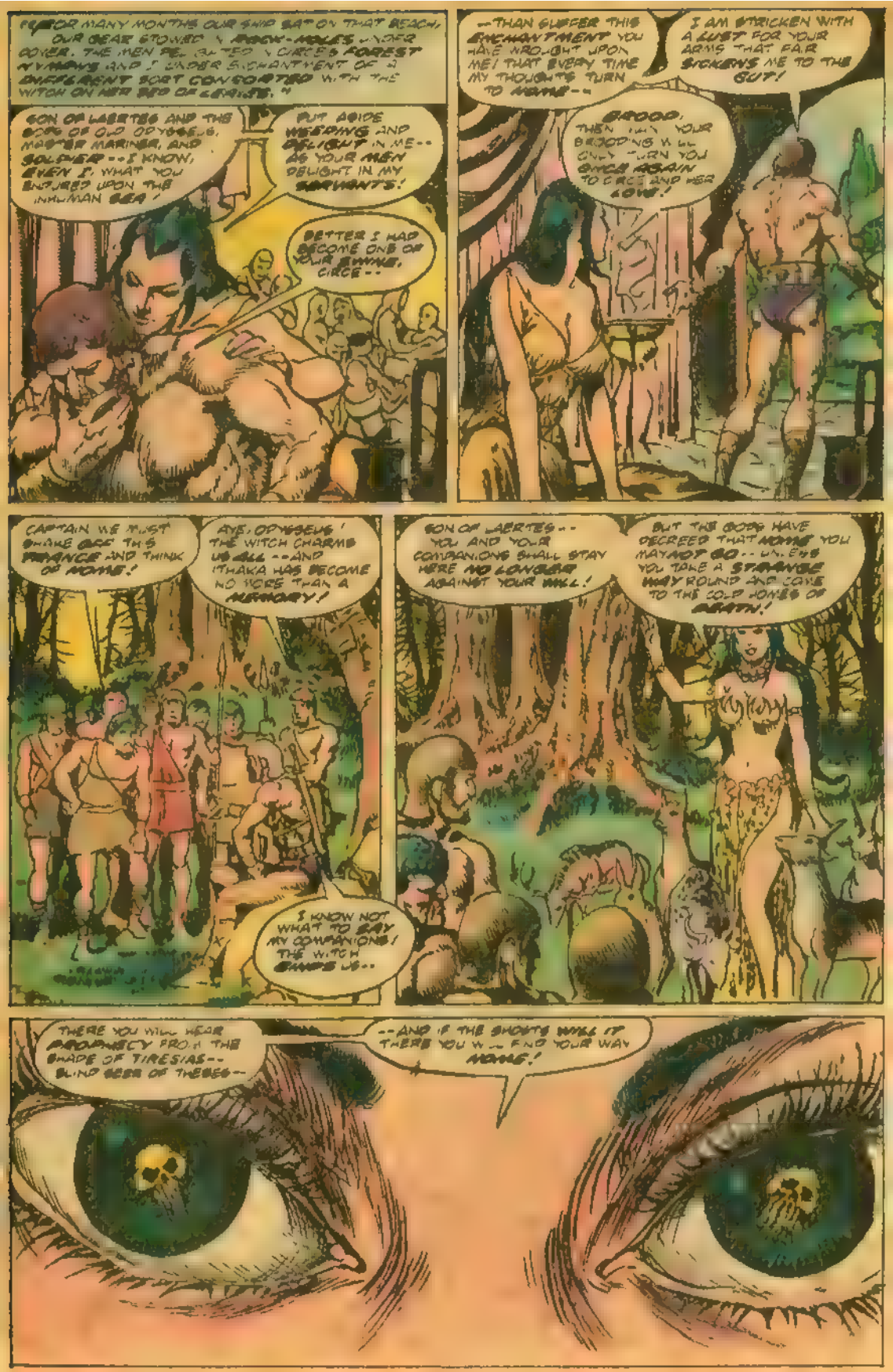

"WE MADE OUR LANDFALL AT AIOLIA DOMAIN OF AIOLOS, THE WIND KING."
"FOR A MONTH WAS I KEPT TO TELL AGAIN TO ALL WHO WOULD HEAR THE TALE OF TROY, THE SHIPS AND THE GREEK HEROES LIVING AND DEAD--"
"WHEN IT CAME TIME TO DEPART, OLD AIOLOS MADE ME A PRESENT OF A BAG CONTAINING THE MOST FAVORABLE OF WINDS, TO SPEED US ON OUR JOURNEY HOMEWARD--"
"--BUT MY CREW, TIRED AND JEALOUS OF THEIR CAPTAIN'S GOOD FORTUNE, PLOTTED TO TAKE THE KING'S GIFT FOR THEIR OWN--THINKING THE BAG TO BE FULL OF GOLD AND SILVER."
"--AND EVERY WIND ROARED INTO A HURRICANE DRIVING THE SHIPS WESTWARD--AWAY FROM HOME."
"I REMEMBER OF LATE, BUT CLINGING TO THE SPAR WHILE THE GALE BLEW US BACK TO AIOLIA, LIKE A DOG RETURNING TO ITS MASTER!"
"I ALARMED, THEN, WITH THE LORD OF WINDS TO IMPART AGAIN HIS GIFT TO US--"
"--BUT HE SAW THE DISASTER THAT HAD BEFALLEN US AS A SIGN THAT I WAS DETESTED BY THE GODS--AND HE TURNED US OUT, DRIVING US FROM HIS ISLAND."
"MISFORTUNE FOLLOWED MISFORTUNE AS WE REACHED AT LAMOS--HOME OF ANTHOMANTIS THE VAMPIRE LORD AND HIS COLD STONE QUEEN!"
"--BUT EVEN THERE THE WARLOCK OF LAESTRYGONIA SHOT GREAT BOULDERS FROM SLINGS DOWN UPON OUR HEADS AND SMEARED US LIKE FISH AS WE PASSED BELOW THEIR CLIFF-DWELLINGS!"
"--AND WE COULD NOT THEN KNOW IT TO BE THE ABODE OF CIRCE, FAIRE BEAUTY AND DIVINE--"
"--SHE WHO MEN KNEW AS... WITCH!"
"BUT AT LAST WE MADE LANDFALL AT AN ISLAND THAT APPEARED MORE PEACEFUL THAN ANY WE HAD YET SEEN. IT WAS CALLED AIAIA--"
"THE COMPANIONS FOUGHT--AND MANY DIED--BEFORE WE COULD AGAIN REACH THE SHIPS AND THE OPEN SEA--"

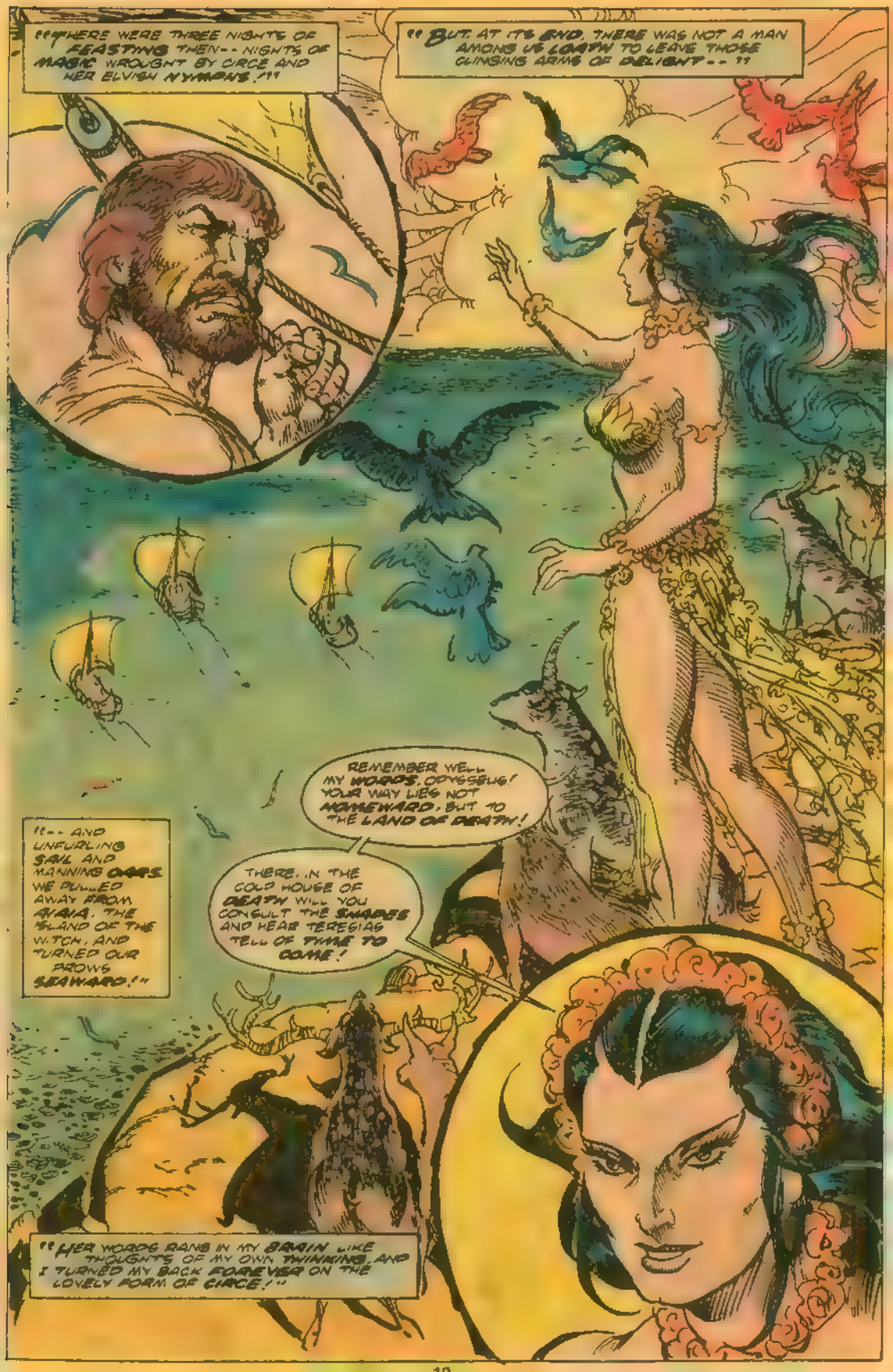

"...AND WE CAME TO AN OPEN GLADE IN WHICH SAT A STRANGE HOUSE MADE FROM THE LIVING FOREST."
EURYLOKHOS! WHAT PLACE IS THIS?
I--DO NOT KNOW, EUPENOR--YET WELL DO I FEAR IT!
LISTEN! FROM WITHIN THE HOUSE, A WOMAN'S VOICE!
"AND--HOW SHE SANG IN HER BEGUILING VOICE. WE HEARD THE SONG--BUT SAW NO ENCHANTER. IT WAS AS IF A SPELL WAS ON OUR EYES, UNTIL POLITES SPOKE--"
COMPANIONS, THERE IS NO NEED FOR STEALTH!
LOOK! IT WAS OUR OWN FEAR BLINDED OUR EYES! THERE IS NONE TO APPREHEND US--
--BUT A YOUNG WEAVER SINGING US A PRETTY SONG!
"SO REASSURED WE GREETED THE BEAUTEOUS MAID FORGETTING THE SPELL THAT HAD KEPT US FROM SEEING HER."
WELCOME SAILORS ALL! I AM... CIRCE MY ISLAND IS FAR FROM OTHER LANDS SO YOU MUST BE TIRED AND HUNGRY!
EAT FORGET YOUR CARES! EAT THAT WHICH I HAVE PROVIDED YOU
"I SWEAR ODYSSEUS THERE WAS FOOD THERE AND WINE, WHERE THERE HAD BEEN NONE A SECOND BEFORE!"
"BY WHAT ENCHANTMENT SHE HELD THEM I KNOW NOT MY CAPTAIN! AS THEY ATE AND DRANK SHE SPOKE NOT TO THEM BUT TO ME!"
GO EURYLOKHOS! RUN BACK TO ODYSSEUS--
-TELL HIM IT IS ME I WANT NOT HIS SWINISH CREW!


"SHE 'SPOKE', ODYSSEUS IN WORDS I ALONE HEARD. AS IF HER VOICE GREW FROM MY OWN THOUGHTS' AND AS I STARED--!!
"--MAY APOLLO STRIKE ME IF I LIE. MY CAPTAIN, BUT ONCE MORE DID CIRCE SMILE AND THE MEN BEGAN TO TRANSFORM--"
WHAT--WHAT HAPPENED TO US? WHY DO I FEEL SO STRANGE??
IT IS THE WOMAN--SHE IS A WITCH!
"--INTO SWINE!!"
TELL ODYSSEUS HE MAY HAVE HIS MEN BACK, EURYLOKHOS--
--WHEN HE HAS EXORCISED THE EVIL HIMSELF!
STAY AWAY FROM ME, WITCH!
BEWITCH ME NOT!!
FORGIVE ME, MY LORD, BUT I PLEAD THAT PLACE...I BEG YOU, ORDER ME TO ANGER IF YOU WILL BUT DO NOT MAKE ME GO BACK THERE!
BY ARTEMIS, EURYLOKHOS--YOU SHALL REST HERE. THEN! FETCH HIM FOOD AND WINE AND STAY, ALL WITHIN THE [illegible] SWINE--
--BUT I SEE NOTHING FOR IT BUT TO GO, AND SEEK OUT THIS WITCH!
MAY ARTEMIS, WAYFINDER BE MY GUIDE!


"I TURNED AND LEFT THE SHIP AND SHORE, AND WENT FORTH INTO THE HUSHED WOODLAND TO FIND THE SUBTLE WITCH IN HER LONG HALL!"
WHAT WONDER IS THIS THAT APPEARS GLOWING BEFORE ME?
WHY TAKE THE INLAND PATH ALONE, POOR SEAFARER? YOUR FRIENDS ARE ALL LOCKED IN CIRCE'S HALL -- ARE ALL BECOME LIKE SWINE TO SEE --
--AND IF YOU GO TO SET THEM FREE YOU GO TO STAY AND NEVER MORE MAKE SAIL FOR ITHAKA!
BUT TAKE THIS AMULET -- THIS PLANT -- AND SHRED IT IN THE CUP THE WITCH WILL MAKE YOU DRINK! WHERE OTHERS THERE BECAME ENTHRALLED --
BY ZEUS AND APHRODITE! THE GODS HEARD MY PRAYER FOR SAFE GUIDANCE --
--AND THEY HAVE SENT A HOLY MESSENGER -- HERMES HIMSELF TO DELIVER ME FROM THE WITCH'S SPELL!
SO! THE RAIDER OF CITIES HAS FOUND WITHIN HIMSELF THE COURAGE TO BRAVE THE SPELLS OF CIRCE!
I FEAR THEE NOT WITCH -- BUT COME TO FREE MY CREW!
YOU MAY HAVE THEM, CHAMPION OF THE ACHAEANS -- AFTER YOU HAVE TASTED OF MY HONEYED WINE!

THE GAME MY MEN--ALL SAVE EURYLOKHOS--PARTOOK OF, WITCH? BEFORE THEY TURNED SWINISH AND SLUTTED ON YOUR FLOOR?
YOU SPEAK TO ODYSSEUS CAPTAIN OF THE ARGIVES, CIRCE--NOT SOME UNWITTING BOY!
LAUGH AT CIRCE, O GREAT CONTENDER! LAUGH, CHAMPION OF TROY! BUT IN SECONDS THE BREW WILL DO IT'S WORK--
--AND THEN IT WILL BE TO THE STY WITH ODYSSEUS BOASTER AND BRAGGART, WHERE YOU'LL RUT AND SNORE WITH ALL THE REST!
I THINK NOT, WITCH!
GODS OF DARKNESS! NO MAN HAS EVER DRUNK OF CIRCE'S BREW AND YET FACED HER STANDING ON TWO LEGS INSTEAD OF FOUR!
NO MAN SAVE THE SACKER OF TROY, WEIRD! NO! NOW RELEASE MY MEN--
--OR I'LL BREAK THY SPELL WITH THINE OWN BLOOD!
MERCY, GREAT LORD!
THY CREW IS WHOLE ONCE MORE! SPARE ME, GREAT CHAMPION!
APOLLO AND APHRODITE! IT IS AS SHE SAYS!
WE ARE MEN AGAIN!
PRAISE BE, ODYSSEUS!

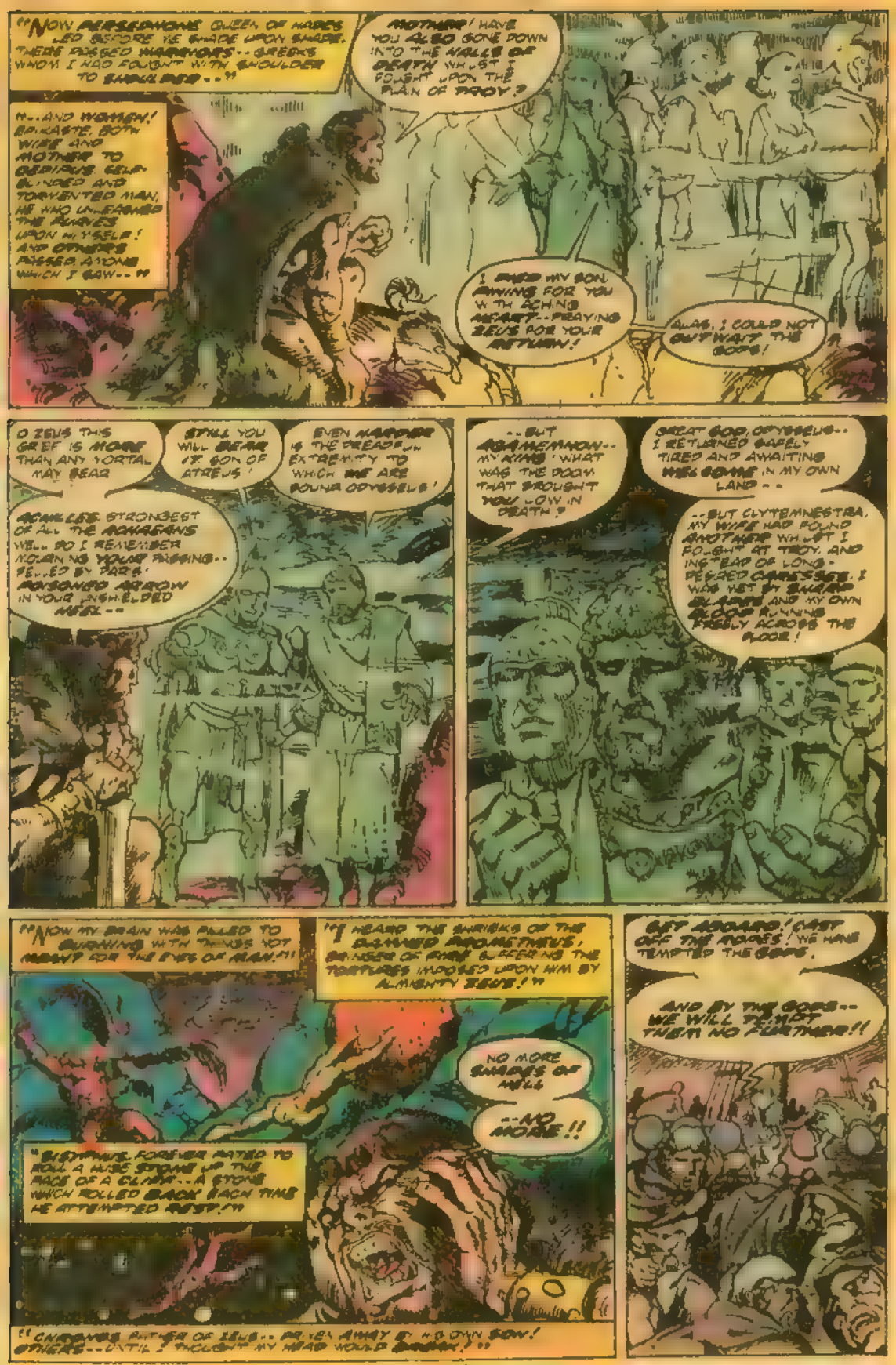

FOR MANY MONTHS OUR SHIP SAT ON THAT BEACH, OUR GEAR STOWED 'N ARROW-HOLES COVER. THE MEN RESTED 'N CIRCE'S FOREST NYMPHS 'AND I' LADEN ENCHANTMENT OF AN OVERLARGE SORT CONSORTED WITH THE WITCH ON HER SEA OF CRUISE."
SON OF LAERTES AND THE GODS OF OLD ODYSSEUS, MASTER MARINER, AND SOLDIER--I KNOW, EVEN I, WHAT YOU ENDURED UPON THE INHUMAN SEA!
PUT ASIDE WEEPING AND DELIGHT IN ME--AS YOUR MEN DELIGHT IN MY ENCHANTS!
BETTER I HAD BECOME ONE OF YOUR SWINE, CIRCE--
--THAN SUFFER THIS ENCHANTMENT YOU HAVE WROUGHT UPON ME! THAT EVERY TIME MY THOUGHTS TURN TO HOME--
I AM STRICKEN WITH A LUST FOR YOUR ARMS THAT FAR SICKENS ME TO THE GUT!
BROOD, THEN, ON YOUR BROODING WILL ONLY TURN YOU ONCE AGAIN TO CIRCE AND HER LOVE!
CAPTAIN WE MUST SHAKE OFF THIS ENCHANTMENT AND THINK OF HOME!
AYE, ODYSSEUS! THE WITCH CHARMS US ALL--AND ITHAKA HAS BECOME NO MORE THAN A MEMORY!
I KNOW NOT WHAT TO SAY MY COMPANIONS! THE WITCH BINDS US--
SON OF LAERTES--YOU AND YOUR COMPANIONS SHALL STAY HERE NO LONGER AGAINST YOUR WILL!
BUT THE GODS HAVE DECREED THAT HOME YOU MAY NOT GO--UNLESS YOU TAKE A STRANGE WAY ROUND AND COME TO THE COLD HOMES OF DEATH!
THERE YOU WILL HEAR PROPHECY FROM THE SHADE OF TIRESIAS--BLIND SEER OF THEBES--
--AND IF THE SHOUTS WILL IT THERE YOU WILL FIND YOUR WAY HOME!

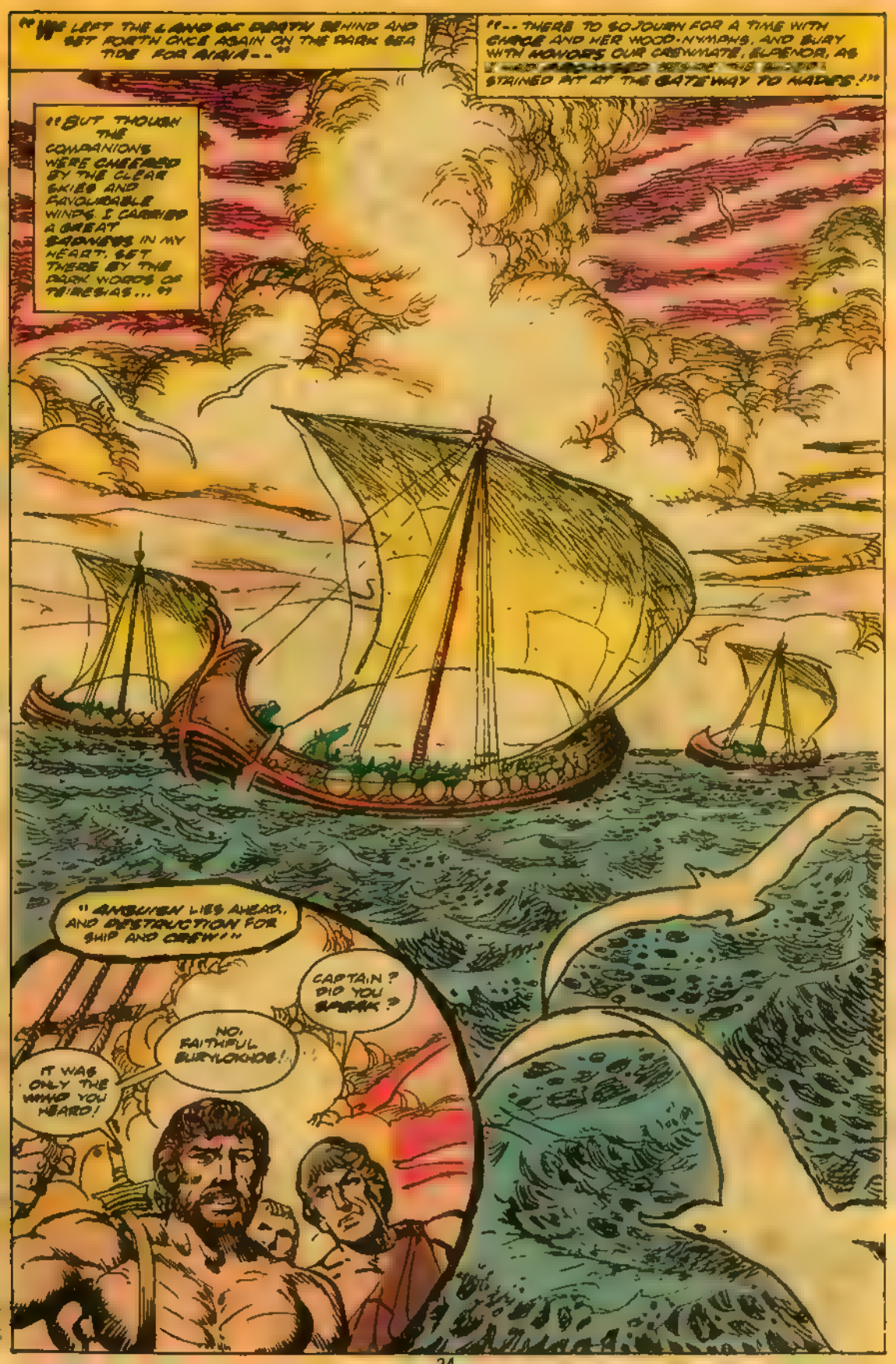

"THERE WERE THREE NIGHTS OF FEASTING THEN-- NIGHTS OF MAGIC WROUGHT BY CIRCE AND HER ELVISH NYMPHS."
"BUT AT ITS END, THERE WAS NOT A MAN AMONG US LOATH TO LEAVE THOSE CLINGING ARMS OF DELIGHT--"
REMEMBER WELL MY WORDS, ODYSSEUS! YOUR WAY LIES NOT HOMEWARD, BUT TO THE LAND OF DEATH!
THERE, IN THE COLD HOUSE OF DEATH WILL YOU CONSULT THE SHADES AND HEAR TEREISIAS TELL OF TIME TO COME!
"--AND UNFURLING SAIL AND MANNING OARS, WE PULLED AWAY FROM AIAIA, THE ISLAND OF THE WITCH, AND TURNED OUR PROWS SEAWARD!"
"HER WORDS RANG IN MY BRAIN LIKE THOUGHTS OF MY OWN THINKING, AND I TURNED MY BACK FOREVER ON THE LOVELY FORM OF CIRCE!"

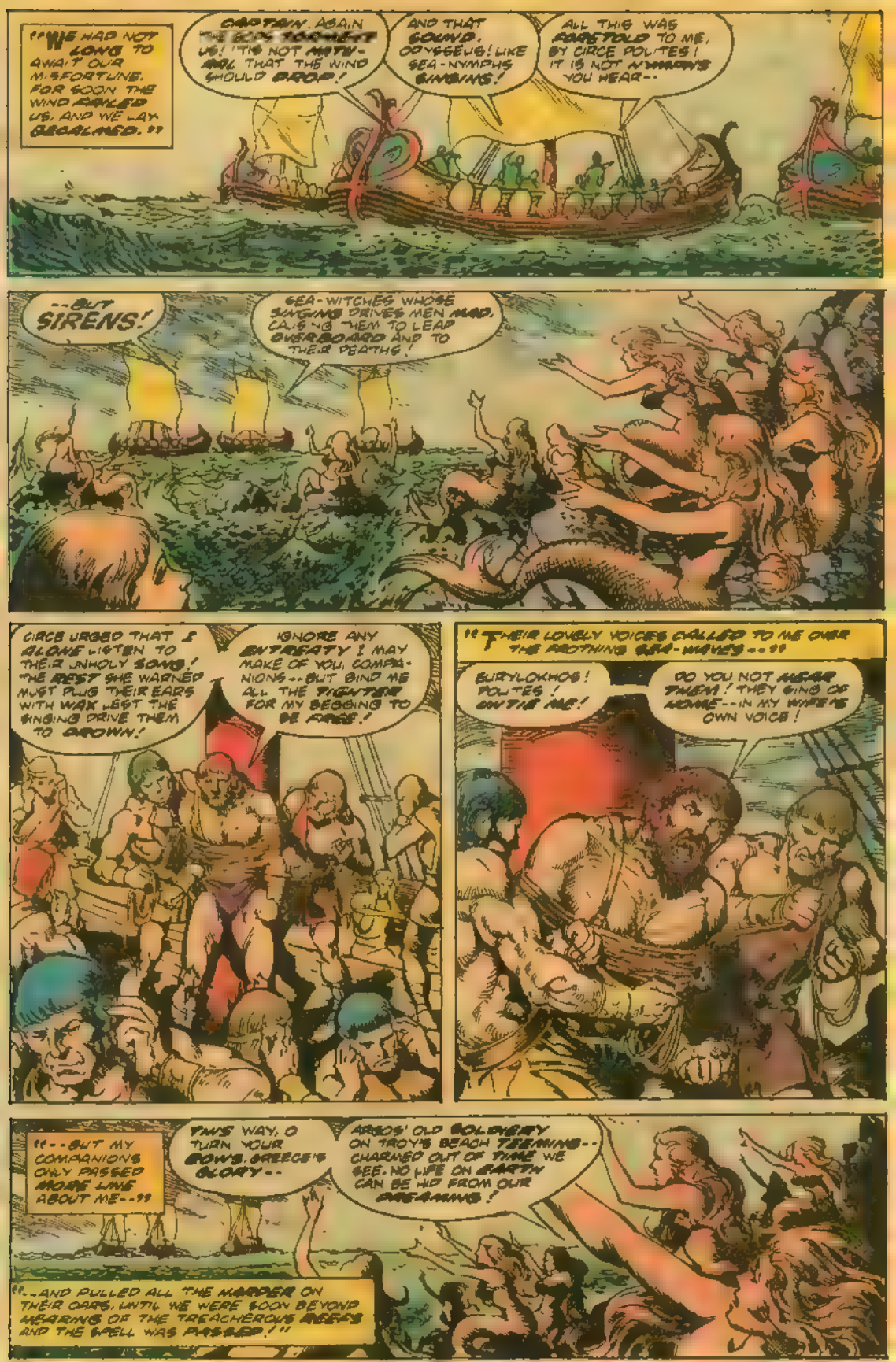
"WE SAILED THE COURSE SET US BY CIRCE, NORTHWARD TO THE ENTRANCE OF THE LAND OF THE DEAD!"
WHAT PLACE IS THIS, ODYSSEUS WHERE SUN NEVER SHINES AND WATER TAKES ON SOLID FORM!?
THE GATEWAY TO HADES, EURYLOKHOS! THE PATH WE MUST TAKE TO LEARN OF THINGS PAST AND THINGS YET TO COME!
A LAND EVEN THE GODS FEAR TO ENTER MY FRIEND!
LAND HO -- THOUGH BY GREAT ZEUS, I DARE NOT SAY WHAT LAND IT IS!
CEASE THY BLASPHEMING, POLITES!
WE HAVE REACHED THAT LAND WHICH WE HAVE SOUGHT, GUIDED BY THE WHIM OF THE GODS!
THERE LIES NAUTES COMPANIONS-- AND OUR FATE AND FUTURE!
MAY ZEUS PRESERVE US!

"WE MADE THE LAND. PUT RAM AND EWE ASHORE, AND TOOK OUR WAY TO FIND THE PLACE FORETOLD TO US BY CIRCE."
CAPTAIN THE MIST WRAPS US ROUND WITH HANDS THAT CLUTCH MY HEART!
I CAN SEE FACES IN THIS FOG OF SHE IS--FACES OF MEN I KNOW TO HAVE PASSED FROM THE LAND OF THE LIVING!
MIND NOT THE SHADES, POLITES BUT BRING FORTH
I HAVE SWORN AN OATH TO SACRIFICE TO THE NATIONS OF THE DEAD--AND TO CALL FORTH TEIRESIAS--B...ND PROPHET OF THEBES!
I ASK NO MAN TO STAND BESIDE ME TO WITNESS THE GATHERING OF SOULS--
--SO GET YE BACK TO THE SHIPS--AND AWAIT MY RETURN!
FOR THOSE FOR WHOM LIFE IS NO LONGER CANNOT RESIST THE CALL OF BLOOD!
"THE COMPANIONS WERE ONLY TOO GLAD TO WITHDRAW--"
"--AND DRAWN BY THE SACRIFICE, THE FIRST SHADE TO APPEAR WAS THAT OF ONE OF MY CREW--A LAD CALLED ELPENOR--WHO HAD MET HIS DEATH FROM WINE AND A ROOF THAT LAST DAY OF FEASTING ON THE ISLAND OF CIRCE!"
ELPENOR! HOW IS THIS THAT YOU COULD JOURNEY TO THE WESTERN DOOR FASTER AFOOT THAN COULD I IN MY BLACK LUGGER?
GREAT CAPTAIN, COULD I VIE ON CIRCE'S SHORE! RETURN THERE AND BURY MY CORPSE, THIS I BID!
DO NOT ABANDON ME AND TEMPT THE GODS' WRATH!

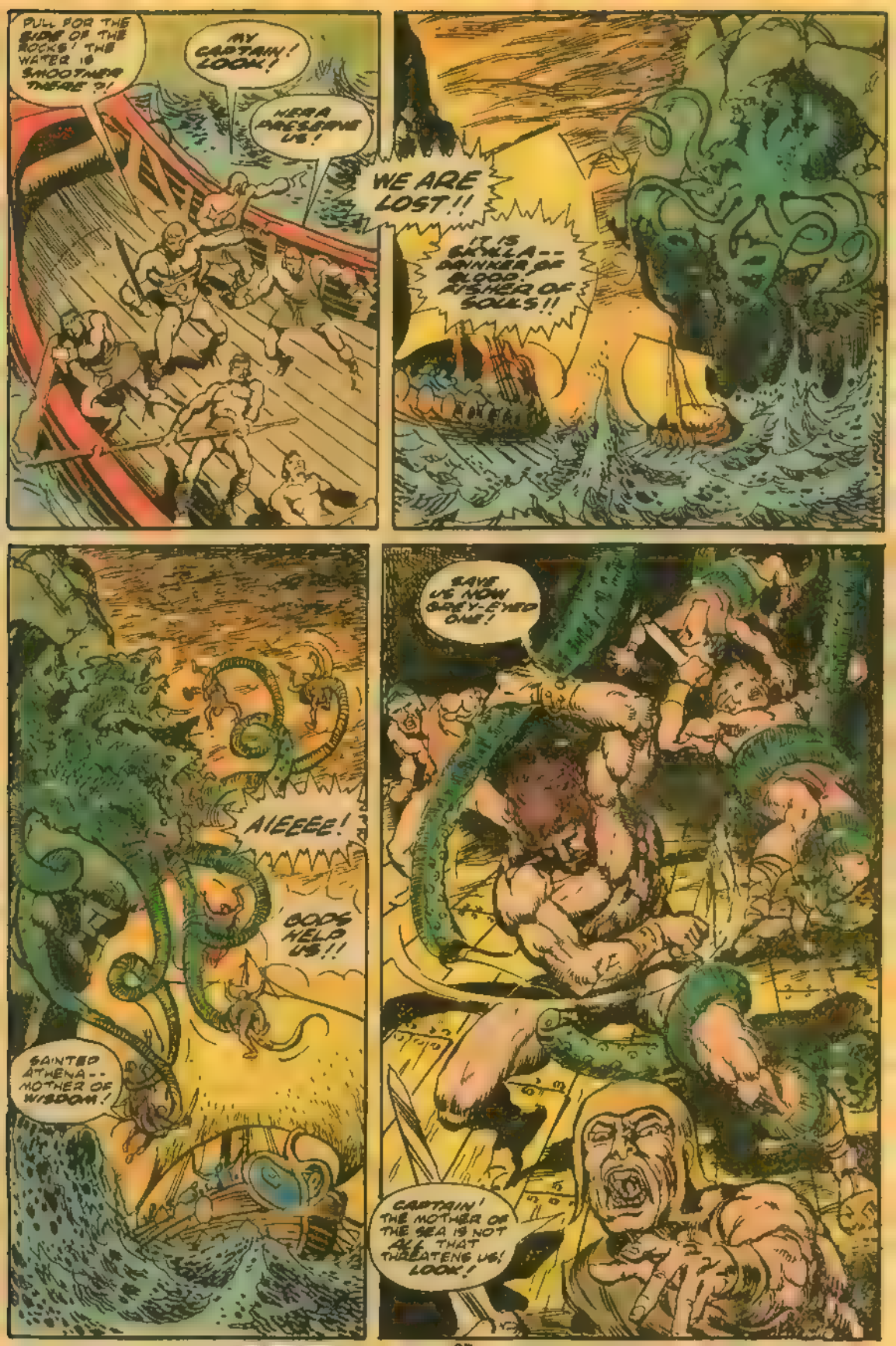
"I PROMISED THE WRETCHED SPIRIT THAT I WOULD DO AS HE ASKED AND, AS HE KNELT TO DRINK THE STILL-WARM BLOOD OF THE RAM--"
SON OF LAERTES AND THE GODS OF OLD, WHY HAST THOU LEFT THE BLAZING SUN O MAN OF WOE, TO COME TO THE COLD DEAD AND JOYLESS REGION?
KNOW YE THAT I BE TEIRESIAS OF THEBES HE YOU SEEK! STAND CLEAR, PUT UP YOUR SWORD AND LET ME BUT TASTE OF BLOOD AND I WILL SPEAK TRUE!
YE SEEK BUT A RAM AND THE HONEYED LIGHTS OF HOME, GREAT CAPTAIN-- BUT ANGUISH LIES AHEAD!
THERE ARE THOSE OF THE GODS THAT HATE YOU, ODYSSEUS! POSEIDON-- HE WHOSE SON YOU BLINDED, THOUGH WELL DID THE MONSTER DESERVE IT!
WHAT SHADES DO YOU CONJURE FORTH TEIRESIAS? I HEAR GROANING--AND LAUGHTER THAT GNAWS MY EARS LIKE LAMENTATION!
ODYSSEUS--I SEE DESTRUCTION FOR SHIP AND CREW BUT YOU SHALL SURVIVE ALONE, TO RETURN HOME UNDER STRANGE SAIL!
BUT EVEN THERE YOU WILL FIND NOT REST--BUT YOUR OWN HOUSE FILLED WITH TROUBLE AND YOUR LIVESTOCK EATEN BY INSOLENT MEN AS THEY MOCK TELEMAKHOS [redacted] SON--
--AND COURT YOUR LADY, PENELOPE--SO SURE ARE THEY IN THEIR COWARDICE THAT YOU HAVE PERISHED LONG SINCE ON THE JOURNEY HOMEWARD FROM TROY!
WEEP NOT, MAN--LEST YOU MISS THAT WHICH THE GODS HAVE DID ME REVEAL TO YOU!
--TEN WELL, ODYSSEUS AND I WILL FORETELL TO YOU THAT WHICH WILL TURN A SAD HOMECOMING INTO A MOMENT BOTH OF JOY--AND REVENGE...
"I HEARD THE WORDS OF THE BLIND THEBAN--"
"--AND HARDENED MY HEART FOR THAT WHICH I KNEW I MUST DO--AND SOON!"

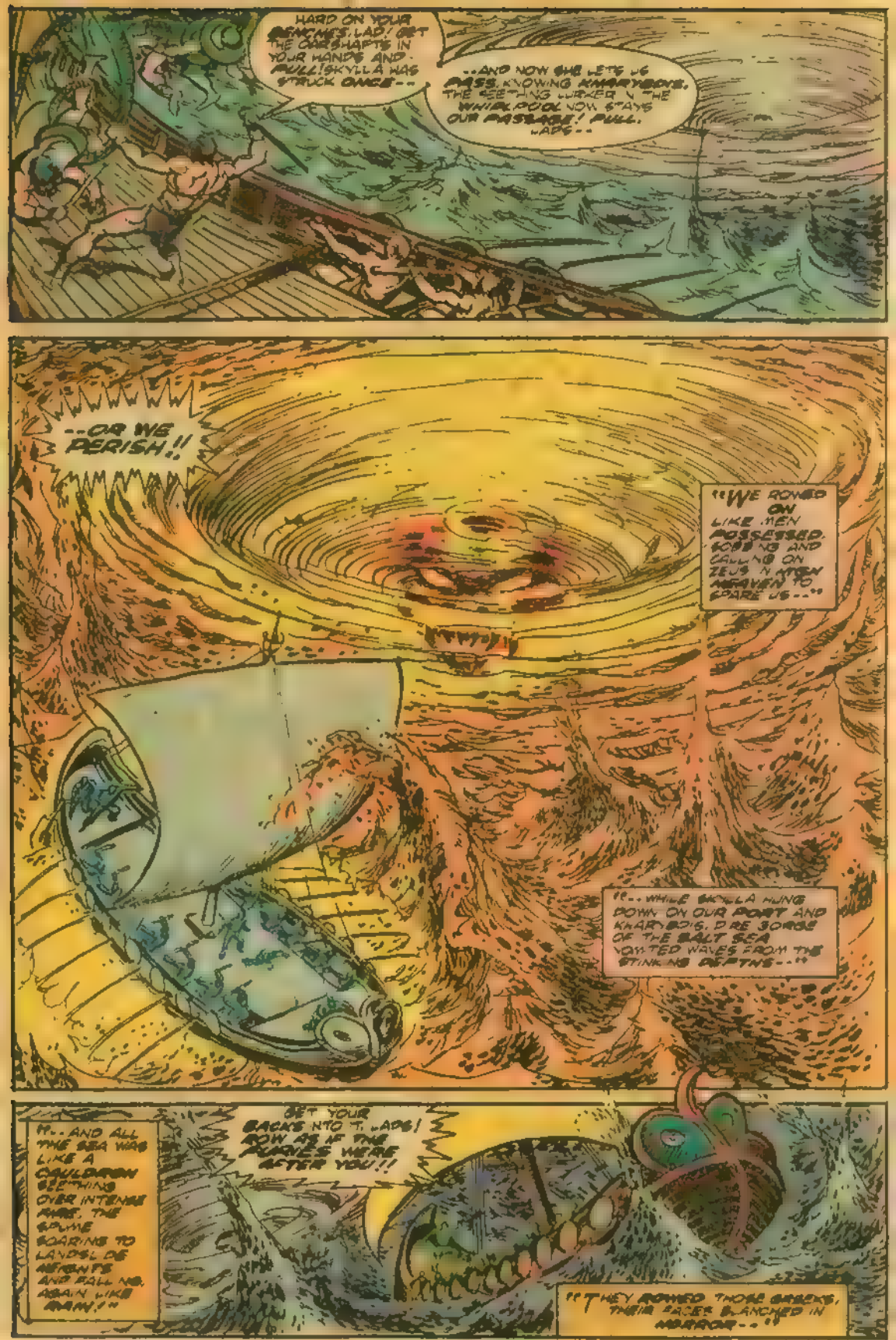

"NOW PERSEPHONE QUEEN OF SHADES LED BEFORE ME SHADE UPON SHADE. THERE PASSED WARRIORS--GREEKS WHOM I HAD FOUGHT WITH SHOULDER TO SHOULDER--"
MOTHER! HAVE YOU ALSO GONE DOWN INTO THE HALLS OF DEATH WHERE FOUGHT UPON THE PLAIN OF TROY?
"--AND WOMEN! EURYKASTE, BOTH WIFE AND MOTHER TO OEDIPUS SELF-BLINDED AND TORMENTED MAN, HE WHO UNEARTHED THE RIDDLE UPON HIMSELF! AND OTHERS PASSED AROUND WHICH I SAW--"
I SENT MY SON AWAY FOR YOU WITH ACHING HEART--PRAYING ZEUS FOR YOUR RETURN!
ALAS, I COULD NOT OUTWAIT THE GODS!
O ZEUS THIS GRIEF IS MORE THAN ANY MORTAL MAY BEAR
STILL YOU WILL BEAR IT SON OF ATREUS!
EVEN HARDIER IS THE DREAD IN EXTREMITY TO WHICH WE ARE BOUND ODYSSEUS!
RELENTLESS STRONGEST OF ALL THE ACHAEANS WILL SO I REMEMBER MOURNING YOUR PASSING--FELLED BY PARIS' POISONED ARROW IN YOUR SHIELDED NEED--
--BUT AGAMEMNON--MY KING! WHAT WAS THE DOOM THAT BROUGHT YOU LOW IN DEATH?
GREAT GOD, ODYSSEUS--I RETURNED SAFELY TIRED AND AWAITING WELCOME IN MY OWN LAND--
--BUT CLYTEMNESTRA, MY WIFE HAD FOUND ANOTHER WHILST I FOUGHT AT TROY, AND INSTEAD OF LONG-PLEDGED CARESSES, I WAS YET BY SWORD SLASHED AND MY OWN BLOOD RUNNING FREELY ACROSS THE FLOOR!
"NOW MY BRAIN WAS FILLED TO OVERFLOWING WITH THOUGHTS NOT MEANT FOR THE EYES OF MAN!"
"I HEARD THE SHRIEKS OF THE DAMNED AGAMEMNON, SINNER OF RARE DEGREE AS THE TORTURES IMPOSED UPON HIM BY ALMIGHTY ZEUS!"
NO MORE SHADES OF HELL
--NO MORE!!
"SISYPHUS, FOREVER DOOMED TO ROLL A HUGE STONE UP THE FACE OF A CLIFF--A STONE WHICH ROLLED BACK EACH TIME HE ATTEMPTED REST!"
"CRONOS FATHER OF ZEUS--PRAY AWAY THIS OWN SON! OTHERS--UNTIL I THOUGHT MY HEAD WOULD BURST!"
GET ABOARD! CAST OFF THE MOORS! WE HAVE TEMPTED THE GODS.
AND BY THE GODS--WE WILL TEMPT THEM NO FURTHER!!

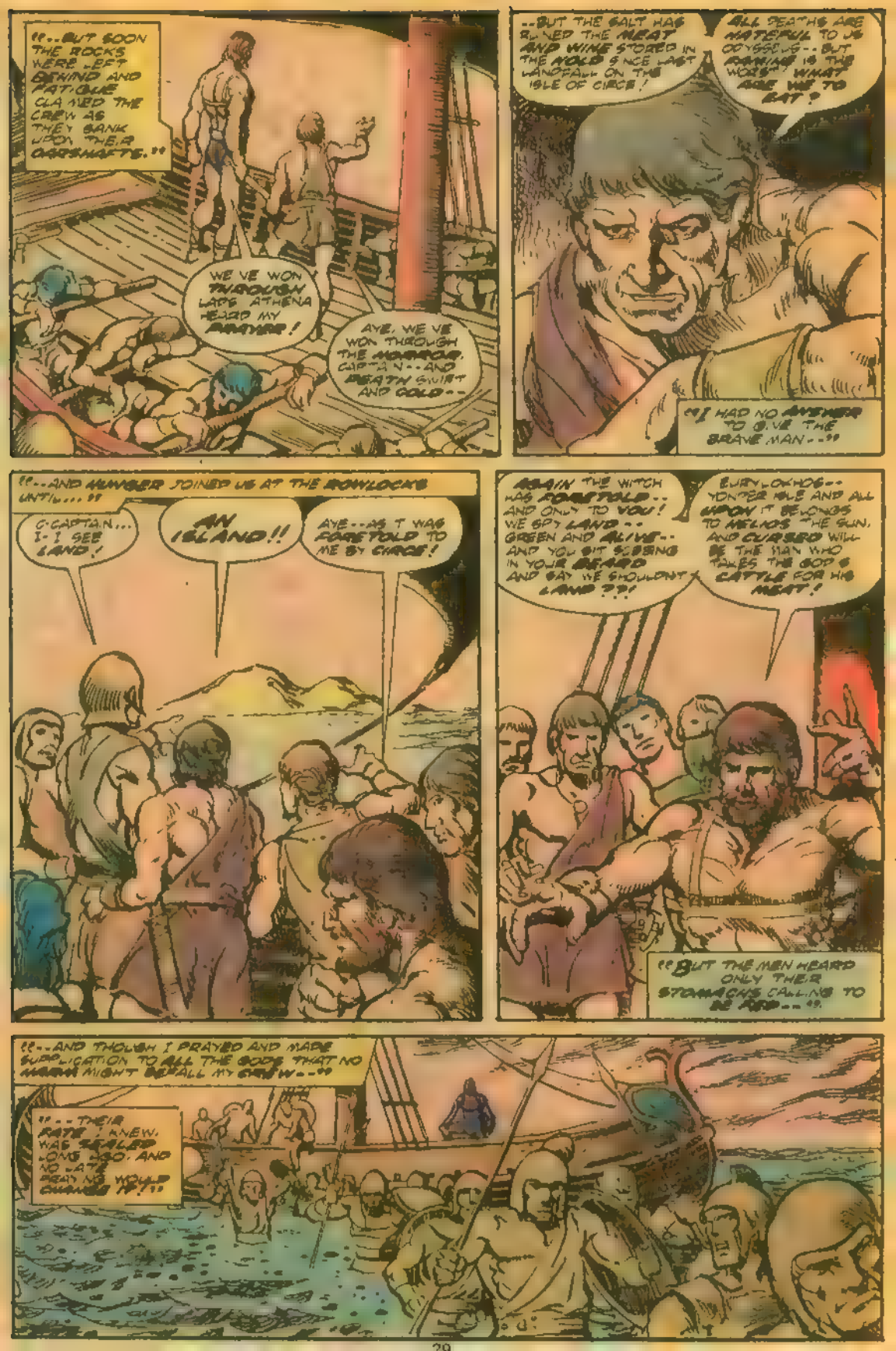

"WE LEFT THE LAND OF CIRCE BEHIND AND SET FORTH ONCE AGAIN ON THE DARK SEA TIDE FOR AVAIA--"
"--THERE TO SOJOURN FOR A TIME WITH CIRCE AND HER WOOD-NYMPHS, AND BURY WITH HONOURS OUR CREWMATE, ELPENOR, AS I HAD PROMISED BEFORE THE GODS. STRAINED AT THE GATEWAY TO HADES!"
"BUT THOUGH THE COMPANIONS WERE CHEERED BY THE CLEAR SKIES AND FAVOURABLE WINDS I CARRIED A GREAT SADNESS IN MY HEART. SET THERE BY THE DARK WORDS OF TIRESIAS..."
"ANGUISH LIES AHEAD, AND DESTRUCTION FOR SHIP AND CREW!"
CAPTAIN? DID YOU SPEAK?
NO, FAITHFUL EURYLOCHOS!
IT WAS ONLY THE WIND YOU HEARD!

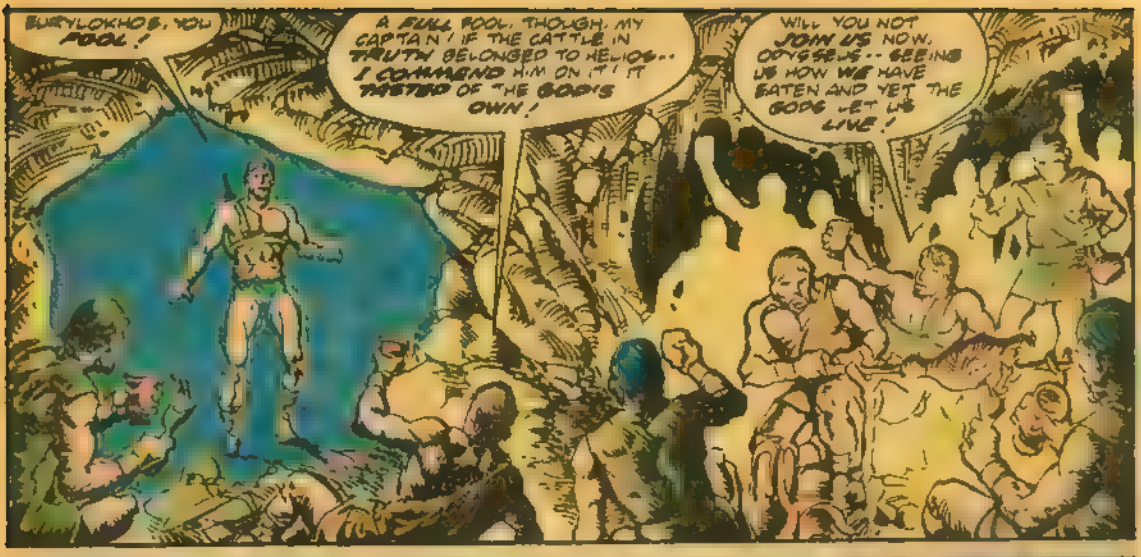

"WE HAD NOT LONG TO AWAIT OUR MISFORTUNE. FOR SOON THE WIND RAILED US, AND WE LAY BECALMED."
CAPTAIN, AGAIN THE GODS TORMENT US! 'TIS NOT MYTHOL THAT THE WIND SHOULD DROP!
AND THAT SOUND, ODYSSEUS! LIKE SEA-NYMPHS SINGING!
ALL THIS WAS FORETOLD TO ME, BY CIRCE POLITES! IT IS NOT NYMPHS YOU HEAR--
--BUT SIRENS!
SEA-WITCHES WHOSE SINGING DRIVES MEN MAD, CALLING THEM TO LEAP OVERBOARD AND TO THEIR DEATHS!
CIRCE URGED THAT I ALONE LISTEN TO THEIR UNHOLY SONG! THE REST SHE WARNED MUST PLUG THEIR EARS WITH WAX LEST THE SINGING DRIVE THEM TO DROWN!
IGNORE ANY ENTREATY I MAY MAKE OF YOU, COMPANIONS--BUT BIND ME ALL THE TIGHTER FOR MY BEGGING TO BE FREE!
"THEIR LOVELY VOICES CALLED TO ME OVER THE FROTHING SEA-WAVES--"
BURYLOKHOS! POLITES! ON THE MC!
DO YOU NOT HEAR THEM! THEY SING OF HOME--IN MY WIFE'S OWN VOICE!
"--BUT MY COMPANIONS ONLY PASSED MORE WAX ABOUT ME--"
THUS WAY, O TURN YOUR BOWS, GREECE'S GLORY--
ARGOS' OLD SOLDIERY ON TROY'S BEACH TEEMING-- CHARMED OUT OF TIME WE SEE. NO LIFE ON EARTH CAN BE HID FROM OUR DREAMING!
"--AND PULLED ALL THE HARDER ON THEIR OARS, UNTIL WE WERE SOON BEYOND HEARING OF THE TREACHEROUS REEFS AND THE SPELL WAS PASSED!"

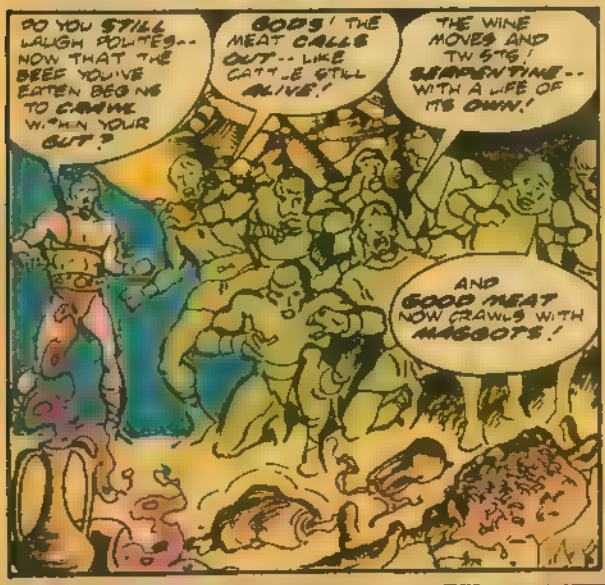
"BUT SCARCELY HAD THE SIRENS FADED BEYOND THE SEA'S HORIZON, THAN--"
ODYSSEUS! THE WIND IS AGAIN WITH US!
BUT IT... SMACKS! LIKE A SOUL LOST IN MISERY!
MAN THE OARS! MY COMPANIONS! WE'VE BRAVED PERILS GREATER THAN ANY WIND--
GODS! THE SAILS ARE FILLED! WE FLY OVER THE WAVES!!
WHAT WIND IS THIS THAT PULLS THE MIST FROM OUR VERY MINDS?
FRIENDS, HAVE WE NEVER BEEN IN DANGER BEFORE THIS? WHEN THE CYCLOPS HAD US PENNED-- DID I NOT KEEP MY NERVE AND LEAD US FREE?
TRUE ENOUGH, MY CAPTAIN! BUT WHAT WAS THE CYCLOPS--
--TO COMPARE WITH THAT!!?


PULL FOR THE SIDE OF THE ROCKS! THE WATER IS SMOOTHER THERE?!
MY CAPTAIN! LOOK!
NEAR A MAELSTROM US!
WE ARE LOST!!
IT IS SCYLLA-- DANCER OF BLOOD, KISSER OF SOULS!!
AIEEEE!
GODS HELP US!!
SAINTED ATHENA-- MOTHER OF WISDOM!
SAVE US NOW BIG-EYED ONE!
CAPTAIN! THE MOTHER OF THE SEA IS NOT ALL THAT THREATENS US! LOOK!


HARD ON YOUR BENCHES, LADS! GET THE OARSHAFTS IN YOUR HANDS AND PULL! SKYLLA WAS STRUCK ONCE--
..AND NOW SHE LETS US PASS, KNOWING KHARYBDIS, THE SEETHING LURKER 'N THE WHIRLPOOL NOW STAYS OUR PASSAGE! PULL, LADS--
--OR WE PERISH!!
"WE ROWED ON LIKE MEN POSSESSED, SOBBING AND CALLING ON ZEUS 'N ALL HEAVEN TO SPARE US--"
"..WHILE SKYLLA HUNG DOWN ON OUR PORT AND KHARYBDIS, DIRE SORCE OF THE SALT SEA VOMITED WAVES FROM THE STINKING DEPTHS--"
"..AND ALL THE SEA WAS LIKE A CAULDRON SEETHING OVER INTENSE FIRE. THE SPUME SOARING TO LANDSL DE HEIGHTS AND FALL NO. AGAIN LIKE RAIN!"
GET YOUR BACKS INTO IT, LADS! ROW AS IF THE FURIES WERE AFTER YOU!!
"THEY ROWED THOSE BENCHES, THEIR FACES BLANCHED IN HORROR--"


"...BUT SOON THE ROCKS WERE LEFT BEHIND AND FATIGUE CLAIMED THE CREW AS THEY SANK UPON THEIR OARSMANSHIP."
WE'VE WON THROUGH LADY ATHENA HEARD MY PRAYER!
AYE, WE'VE WON THROUGH THE MORROW, CAPTAIN--AND DEATH QUIET AND COLD--
--BUT THE SALT HAS RUINED THE MEAT AND WINE STORED IN THE HOLD SINCE LAST LANDFALL ON THE ISLE OF CIRCE!
ALL DEATHS ARE HATEFUL TO US ODYSSEUS--BUT RAVAGE IS THE WORST! WHAT ARE WE TO EAT?
"I HAD NO ANSWER TO GIVE THE BRAVE MAN--"
"...AND HUNGER JOINED US AT THE BONYLOCKS UNTIL..."
O CAPTAIN... I-I SEE LAND!
AN ISLAND!!
AYE--AS I WAS FORETOLD TO ME BY CIRCE!
AGAIN THE WITCH HAS FORETOLD--AND ONLY TO YOU! WE SPY LAND--GREEN AND ALIVE--AND YOU SIT SEEING IN YOUR BEARD AND SAY WE SHOULDN'T LAND?!!
EURYLOKHOS--YONDER ISLE AND ALL UPON IT BELONGS TO HELIOS THE SUN, AND CURSED WILL BE THE MAN WHO TAKES THE GOD'S CATTLE FOR HIS MEAT!
"BUT THE MEN HEARD ONLY THEIR STOMACHS CALLING TO BE FED--"
"...AND THOUGH I PRAYED AND MADE SUPPLICATION TO ALL THE GODS THAT NO HARM MIGHT BEFALL MY CREW--"
"...THEIR FATE, I KNEW, WAS SEALED LONG AGO. AND NO--AT DEAD OF NIGHT--DID WE SET SAIL."

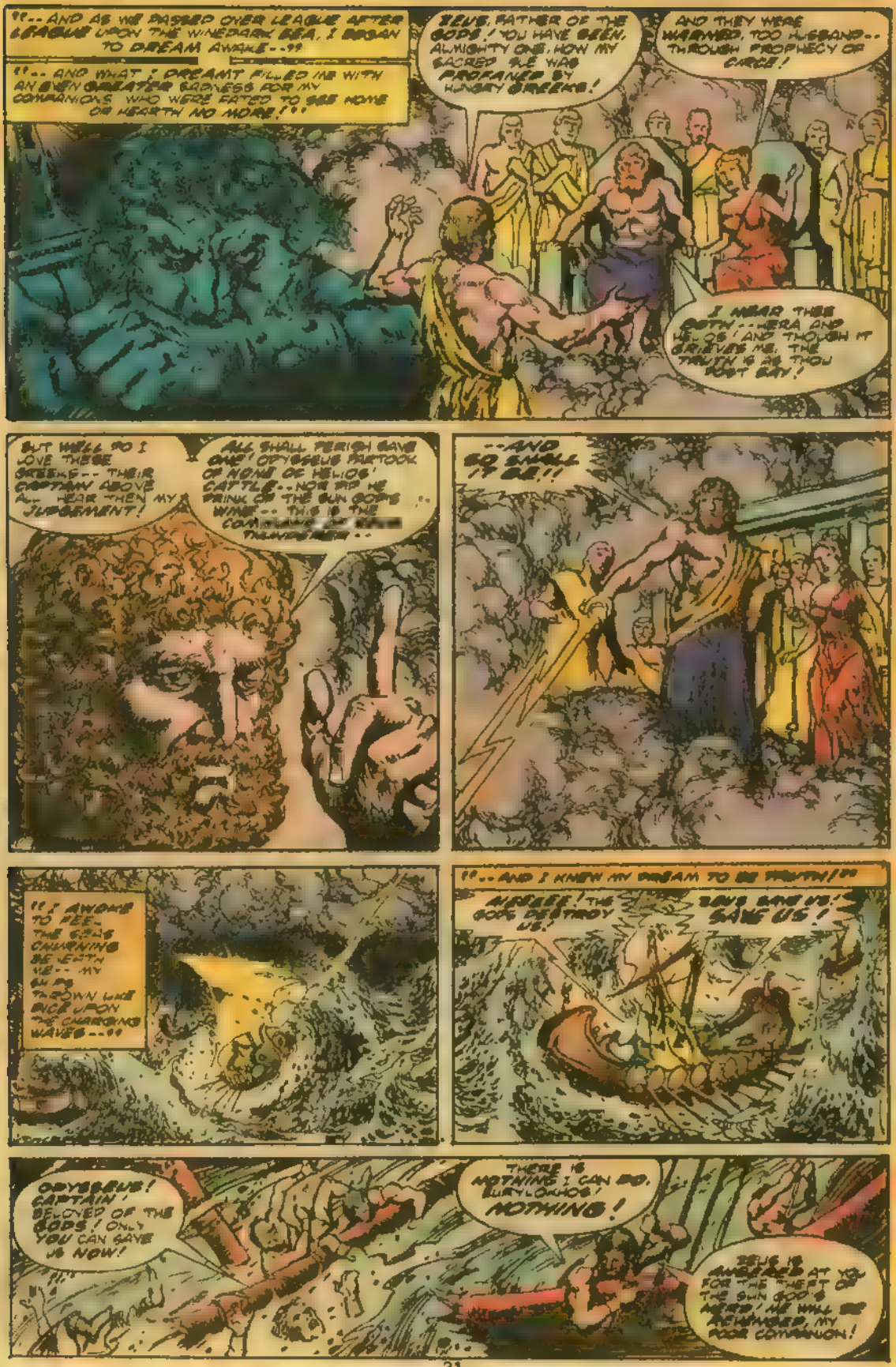

EURYLOKHOS, YOU FOOL!
A FULL FOOL, THOUGH. MY CAPTAIN! IF THE CATTLE IN TRUTH BELONGED TO HELIOS... I COMMEND HIM ON IT! IT TASTED OF THE GODS OWN!
WILL YOU NOT JOIN US NOW, ODYSSEUS -- SEEING US HOW WE HAVE EATEN AND YET THE GODS LET US LIVE!

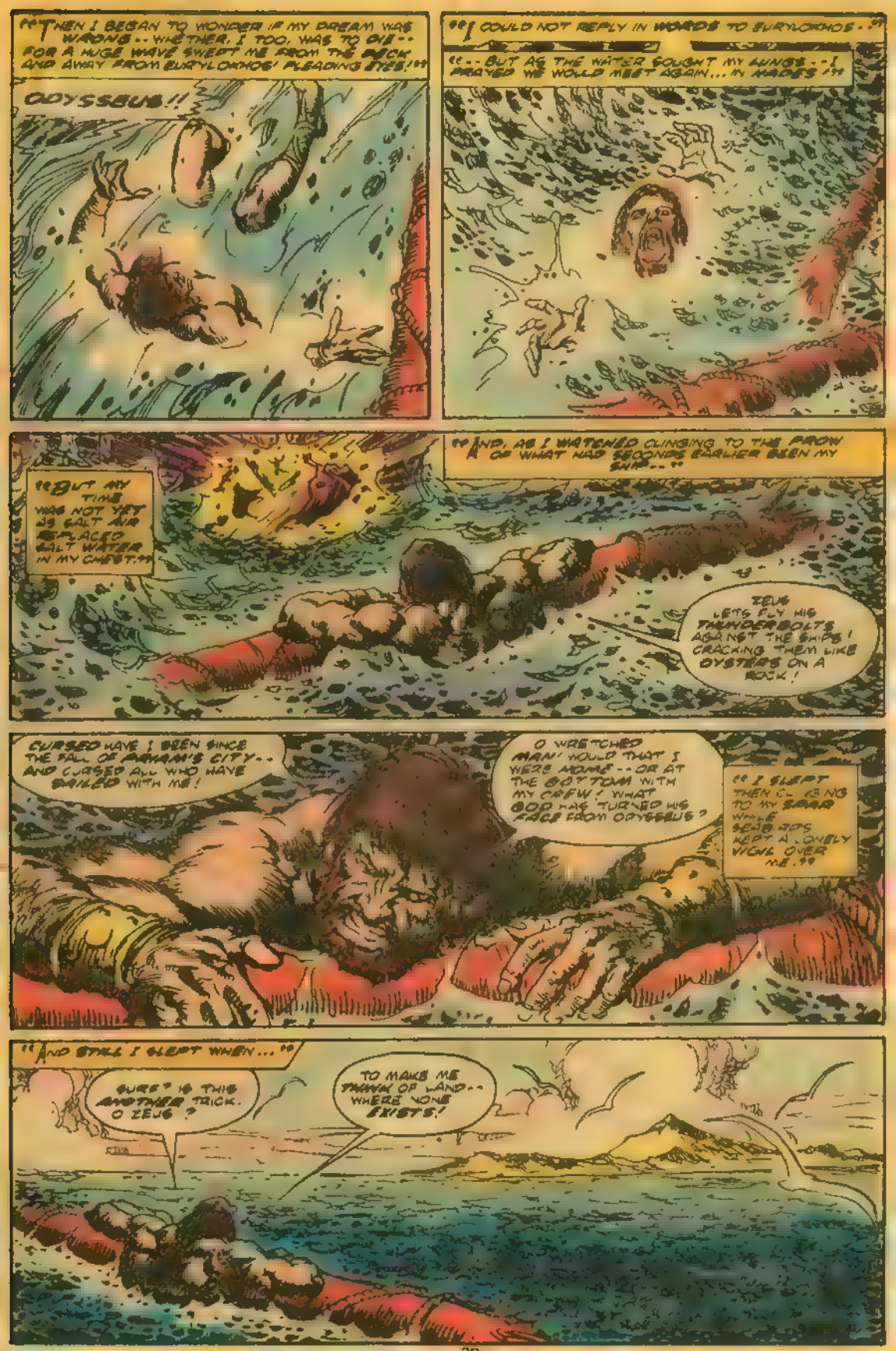

DO YOU STILL LAUGH POLITE?-- NOW THAT THE BEEF YOU'VE EATEN BEGINS TO CRAWL WITHIN YOUR GUT?
GODS! THE MEAT CALLS OUT -- LIKE CATTLE STILL ALIVE!
THE WINE MOVES AND TWISTS! SERPENTINE -- WITH A LIFE OF ITS OWN!
AND GOOD MEAT NOW CRAWLS WITH MAGGOTS!

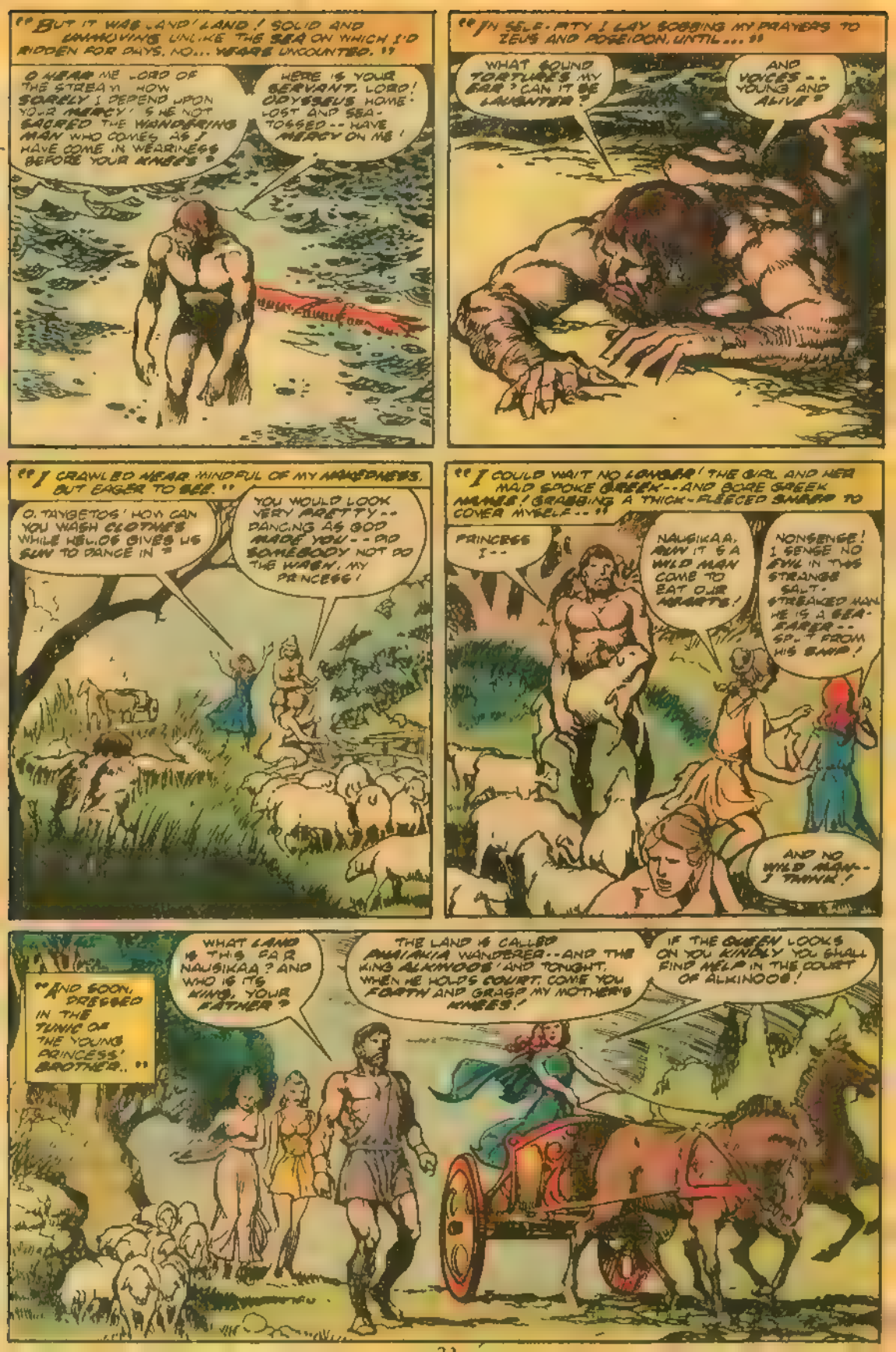
ODYSSEUS, BLESSED CAPTAIN! THE GODS LOVE YOU! CALL ON THEM -- ON ATHENA! BEG THEM TO FORGIVE US!
AS YOU LOVE US, ODYSSEUS! ASK THE GODS FOR MERCY!

GREEDY MEN! YOU HAVE DEFILED THE GODS AND PROFANED SACRED MEAT WITH MORTAL LIPS -- AND YET YOU THINK A PRAYER FROM ME WILL SAVE YOU?
RETURN TO THE SHIPS! YOUR FATE AWAITS YOU THERE! I WILL PRAY -- BUT I KNOW THE TIME FOR PRAYER IS PAST!

"I SAID NOTHING MORE TO THE POOR WRETCHES SOON TO KNOW THE EXTENT OF THEIR MADNESS..."

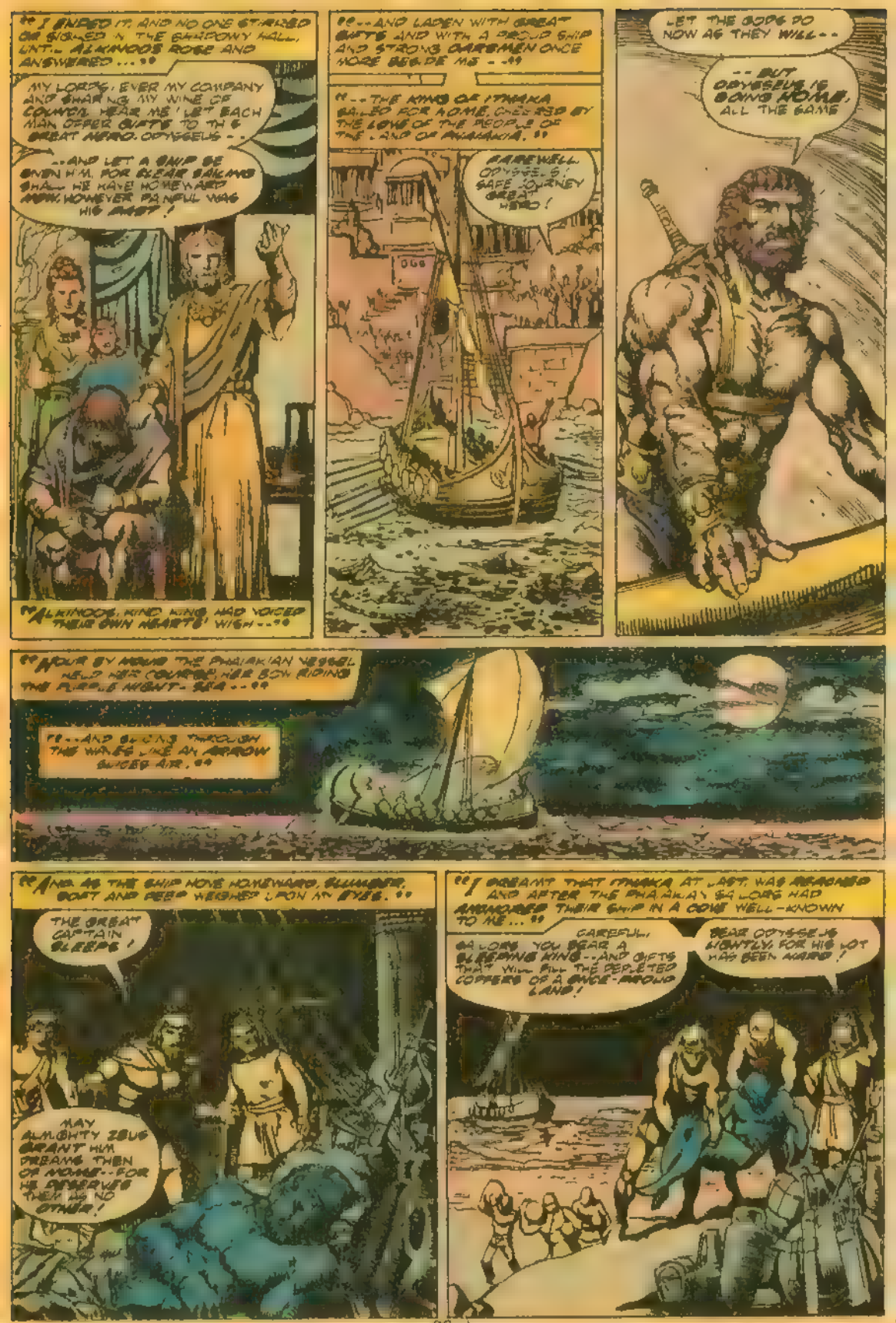

"...AND AS WE PASSED OVER LEAGUE AFTER LEAGUE UPON THE WINEDARK SEA, I BEGAN TO DREAM AWAKE--"
"...AND WHAT I DREAMT FILLED ME WITH AN EVEN GREATER SADNESS FOR MY COMPANIONS WHO WERE FATED TO SEE HOME OR HEARTH NO MORE!"
ZEUS, FATHER OF THE GODS! YOU HAVE SEEN, ALMIGHTY ONE, HOW MY SACRED ISLE WAS PROFANED BY HUNGRY GREEKS!
AND THEY WERE WARNED, TOO HUSBAND... THROUGH PROPHECY OF CIRCE!
I HEAR THEE, GOTH...HERA AND HE-OS! AND THOUGH IT GRIEVES ME, THE TRUTH IS AS THOU HAST SAY!
BUT WELL DO I LOVE THESE GREEKS--THEIR CAPTAIN ABOVE ALL... HEAR THEN MY JUDGEMENT!
ALL SHALL PERISH SAVE ONE! ODYSSEUS PARTOOK OF NONE OF HELIOS' CATTLE--NOR DID HE DRINK OF THE SUN GOD'S WINE--THIS IS THE COMMAND OF THUNDERER--
--AND SO SHALL IT BE!!
"I AWOKE TO SEE THE GODS CAVORTING BE NEATH ME--MY SHIP THROWN LIKE DICE UPON THE CHARGING WAVES--"
"...AND I KNEW MY DREAM TO BE TRUTH!"
NEREUS! THE GODS DESTROY US!
ZEUS, SAVE US! SAVE US!
ODYSSEUS! CAPTAIN! BELOVED OF THE GODS! ONLY YOU CAN SAVE US NOW!
THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO, LADY CIRCE! NOTHING!
ZEUS IS ANGERED AT YOU FOR THE THEFT OF THE SUN GOD'S HERDS! HE WILL BE AVENGED, MY POOR COMPANION!

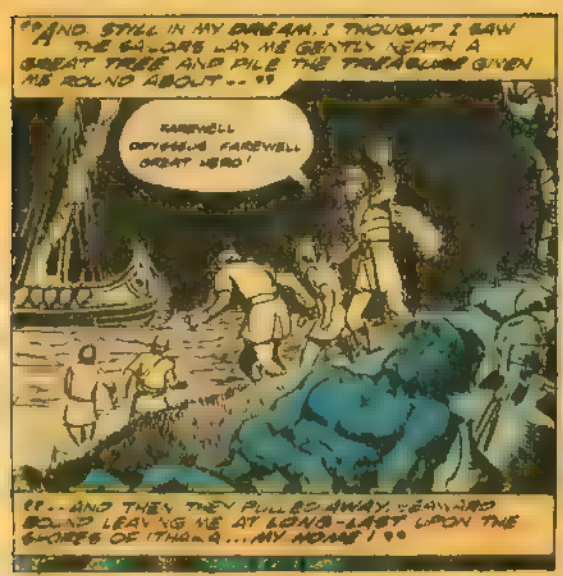

"THEN I BEGAN TO WONDER IF MY DREAM WAS WRONG -- WHETHER, I TOO, WAS TO DIE -- FOR A HUGE WAVE SWEPT ME FROM THE RAFT AND AWAY FROM SURYLOKHOS' PLEADING EYES!"
ODYSSEUS!!
"I COULD NOT REPLY IN WORDS TO SURYLOKHOS --"
"-- BUT AS THE WATER SOUGHT MY LUNGS -- I PRAYED WE WOULD MEET AGAIN... IN HADES!"
"AND, AS I WATCHED CLINGING TO THE PROW OF WHAT HAD SECONDS EARLIER BEEN MY SHIP --"
"BUT MY TIME WAS NOT YET TO GIVE SALT AIR REPLACED SALT WATER IN MY CHEST."
ZEUS LETS FLY HIS THUNDERBOLTS AGAINST THE SHIPS! CRACKING THEM LIKE OYSTERS ON A ROCK!
CURSED HAVE I BEEN SINCE THE FALL OF PRIAM'S CITY -- AND CURSED ALL WHO HAVE SAILED WITH ME!
O WRETCHED MAN! WOULD THAT I WERE HOME -- OR AT THE BOTTOM WITH MY CREW! WHAT GOD HAS TURNED HIS FACE FROM ODYSSEUS?
"I SLEPT THEN CLINGING TO MY SPAR WHILE GOD'S KEPT A LONELY VIGIL OVER ME."
"AND STILL I SLEPT WHEN..."
SURE? IS THIS ANOTHER TRICK, O ZEUS?
TO MAKE ME THINK OF LAND -- WHERE NONE EXISTS!


"BUT IT WAS LAND! LAND! SOLID AND UNMOVING UNLIKE THE SEA ON WHICH I'D RIDDEN FOR DAYS. NO... YEARS UNCOUNTED."
O HEAR ME, LORD OF THE STREAM! HOW SORELY I DEPEND UPON YOUR MERCY! SHE NOT SACRED THE WANDERING MAN WHO COMES AS I HAVE COME IN WEARINESS BEFORE YOUR KNEES!
HERE IS YOUR SERVANT, LORD! ODYSSEUS HOME-LOST AND SEA-TOSSED -- HAVE MERCY ON ME!
"IN SELF-PITY I LAY SOBBING MY PRAYERS TO ZEUS AND POSEIDON, UNTIL..."
WHAT SOUND TORTURES MY EAR? CAN IT BE LAUGHTER?
AND VOICES -- YOUNG AND ALIVE?
"I CRAWLED NEAR, MINDFUL OF MY MANNERS, BUT EAGER TO SEE."
O, TAYGETOS! HOW CAN YOU WASH CLOTHES WHILE HELIOS GIVES US SUN TO DANCE IN?
YOU WOULD LOOK VERY PRETTY -- DANCING AS GOD MADE YOU -- DID SOMEBODY NOT DO THE WASH, MY PRINCESS!
"I COULD WAIT NO LONGER! THE GIRL AND HER MAID SPOKE GREEK -- AND BORE GREEK NAMES! GRABBING A THICK-FLEECED SHEEP TO COVER MYSELF --"
PRINCESS I --
NAUSIKAA, RUN! IT IS A WILD MAN COME TO EAT OUR HEARTS!
NONSENSE! I SENSE NO EVIL IN THIS STRANGE SALT-STREAKED MAN. HE IS A SEA-FARER -- SPAT FROM HIS MOUTH!
AND NO WILD MAN -- I THINK!
"AND SOON, DRESSED IN THE TUNIC OF THE YOUNG PRINCESS' BROTHER..."
WHAT LAND IS THIS FAR NAUSIKAA? AND WHO IS ITS KING, YOUR FATHER?
THE LAND IS CALLED SCHERIA, WANDERER -- AND THE KING ALKINOOS! AND TONIGHT, WHEN HE HOLDS COURT, COME YOU FORTH AND GRASP MY MOTHER'S KNEES!
IF THE QUEEN LOOKS ON YOU KINDLY YOU SHALL FIND HELP IN THE COURT OF ALKINOOS!

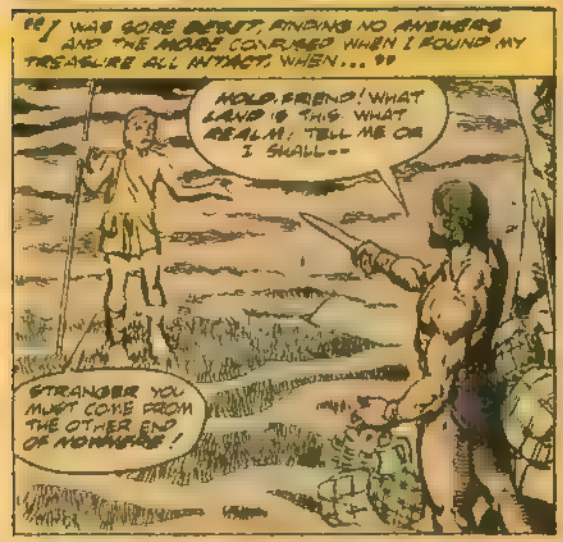
"I DID AS I WAS BID BY THE FAIR AS YGGDS AND, GUIDED BY ATHENA, I ENTERED THE COURT OF ALKINOOS AND HIS QUEEN, ARETE."
"I WAS WELCOMED AS AN HONORED GUEST, OR LIKE A LONG-LOST SON--AND FOR MANY MONTHS WAS I ENTERTAINED THOUGH I TOLD NO ONE MY TRUE NAME OR DESTINATION!"
YOU SPEAK WELL FOR A SAILOR, STRANGER.
HOW COULD I SPEAK OTHERWISE IN YOUR COMPANY, MY QUEEN?
"BUT GREAT GLADNESS LAY UPON MY HEART WHENEVER SEARSACH THE BLIND HARPER WHOSE SONGS OPENED THE EYES OF OTHER MEN, WAS CALLED TO SING OF TROY AND THE HEROES WHO FOUGHT THERE."
"AND TEARS RAN ARESLY DOWN MY FACE HIDDEN TO ALL BUT ALKINOOS BEHIND MY BORROWED CAPE."

FRIENDS--OUR GUEST HERE HAS WEPT THROUGHOUT SEAREACH'S SONG: HE HAS BORNE GREAT SORROW, 'TIS PLAIN--
--AND WE MUST BID HIM KEEP SECRET NO LONGER! SPEAK, STRANGER--AND TELL US WHO THOU ART, AND WHERE LIES THY HOME!
ALKINOOS, KING AND ADMIRATION OF MEN--WHAT SHALL I SAY FIRST AND WHAT SHALL I KEEP UNTIL THE END?
I AM ODYSSEUS--LAERTES' SON! THE GODS HAVE TRIED ME IN A THOUSAND WAYS, AND MY HOME LIES ON THE SEA-WASHED PEAKS OF ITHAKA! LONG HAVE I WANDERED--
--FROM TROY, WHERE I WAS NOT LEAST AMONG THE HEROES THERE, THOUGH LAST MAY I BE OF THOSE WHO YET LIVE! MY WAY WOUND PAST MONSTER AND WITCH, STORM AND FURY SENT BY GOD!
MY TALE IS TOLD, AND I LONG NOW FOR HOME. EVEN THERE, IT HAS BEEN FORETOLD TO ME, WILL I FIND NOT REST--BUT BATTLE ONCE AGAIN!

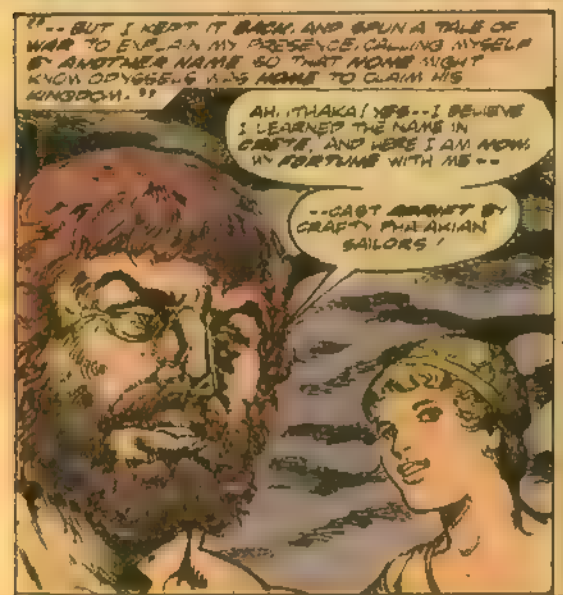

"I SPEED IT, AND NO ONE STARED OR GIGGLED IN THE GARGONY HALL, UNTIL ALKINOOS ROSE AND ANSWERED..."
MY LORDS, EVER MY COMPANY AND SWARING MY WINE OF COUNCIL, HEAR ME! LET EACH MAN OFFER GIFTS TO THE GREAT HERO, ODYSSEUS--
--AND LET A SHIP BE GIVEN HIM, FOR CLEAR SAILING SHALL HE HAVE HOMEWARD NOW, HOWEVER PAINFUL WAS HIS PAST!
"ALKINOOS, KIND KING, HAD VOICED THEIR OWN HEARTS' WISH--"
"--AND LADEN WITH GREAT GIFTS AND WITH A PROUD SHIP AND STRONG OARSMEN ONCE MORE BESIDE ME--"
"--THE KING OF ITHAKA SAILED FOR HOME, CHEERED BY THE LOVE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND OF PHAIAKIA."
FAREWELL, ODYSSEUS! SAFE JOURNEY, GREAT HERO!
LET THE GODS DO NOW AS THEY WILL--
--BUT ODYSSEUS IS GOING HOME, ALL THE GAME
"NOW BY NIGHT THE PHAIAKIAN VESSEL HELD HER COURSE, HER BOW RIDING THE PURPLE NIGHT-SEA--"
"--AND SURGING THROUGH THE WAVES LIKE AN ARROW SLICES AIR."
"AND AS THE SHIP MOVED HOMEWARD, ILLUMINED, BOAT AND DECK WASHED UPON AN EYES."
THE GREAT CAPTAIN SLEEPS!
MAY ALMIGHTY ZEUS GRANT HIM DREAMS THEN OF HOME--FOR HE DESERVES THEM AS NO OTHER!
"I DREAMT THAT ITHAKA AT LAST WAS REACHED AND AFTER THE PHAIAKIAN LORDS HAD ANCHORED THEIR SHIP IN A COVE WELL-KNOWN TO ME..."
CAREFUL, LORDS, YOU BEAR A SLEEPING KING--AND GIFTS THAT WILL FILL THE DEPLETED COFFERS OF A ONCE-PROUD LAND!
BEAR ODYSSEUS LIGHTLY, FOR HIS LOT HAS BEEN HARD!

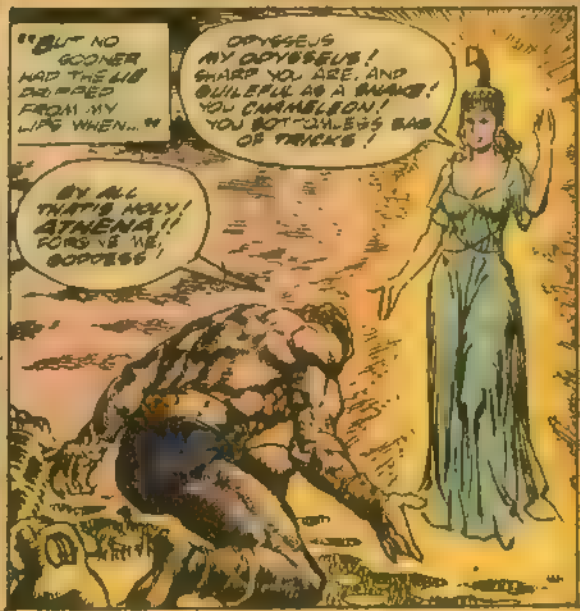

"AND STILL IN MY DREAM, I THOUGHT I SAW THE SAILORS LAY ME GENTLY BENEATH A GREAT TREE AND PILE THE TREASURE GIVEN ME ROUND ABOUT..."
FAREWELL ODYSSEUS FAREWELL GREAT HERO!
"...AND THEY THEY PULLED AWAY, SEAWARD BOUND LEAVING ME AT LONG-LAST UPON THE SHORES OF ITHAKA...MY HOME!"

"BUT WHEN AT LAST I WOKE I COULD NOT SEPARATE DREAM FROM REALITY."
A MIST WRAPS ABOUT ME AND WHAT LAND I CAN SEE IS STRANGE TO MY EYES!
AM I HOME AS MY DREAM FORETOLD --OR HAVE I BEEN BETRAYED, AND LEFT AT ZEUS' ORDERS UPON YET ANOTHER DEADLY AND ENCHANTED ISLE?


"I WAS SORE DEBUT, FINDING NO ANSWERS AND THE MORE CONFUSED WHEN I FOUND MY TREASURE ALL INTACT, WHEN..."
HOLD, FRIEND! WHAT LAND IS THIS, WHAT REALM; TELL ME OR I SHALL--
STRANGER YOU MUST COME FROM THE OTHER END OF NOWHERE!

THIS IS ITHAKA, FRIEND--FAR-FAMED, AND EVERYONE HAS HEARD OF IT.
IT'S KING IS ODYSSEUS AND MEN SAY THAT SOON WILL BE THE DAY OF HIS HOMECOMING ALONG THE WIDE ROAD THAT LED FROM TROY!
"I KEPT TO HEAR THESE WORDS, BUT MY TEARS SOON TURNED TO LAUGHTER..."

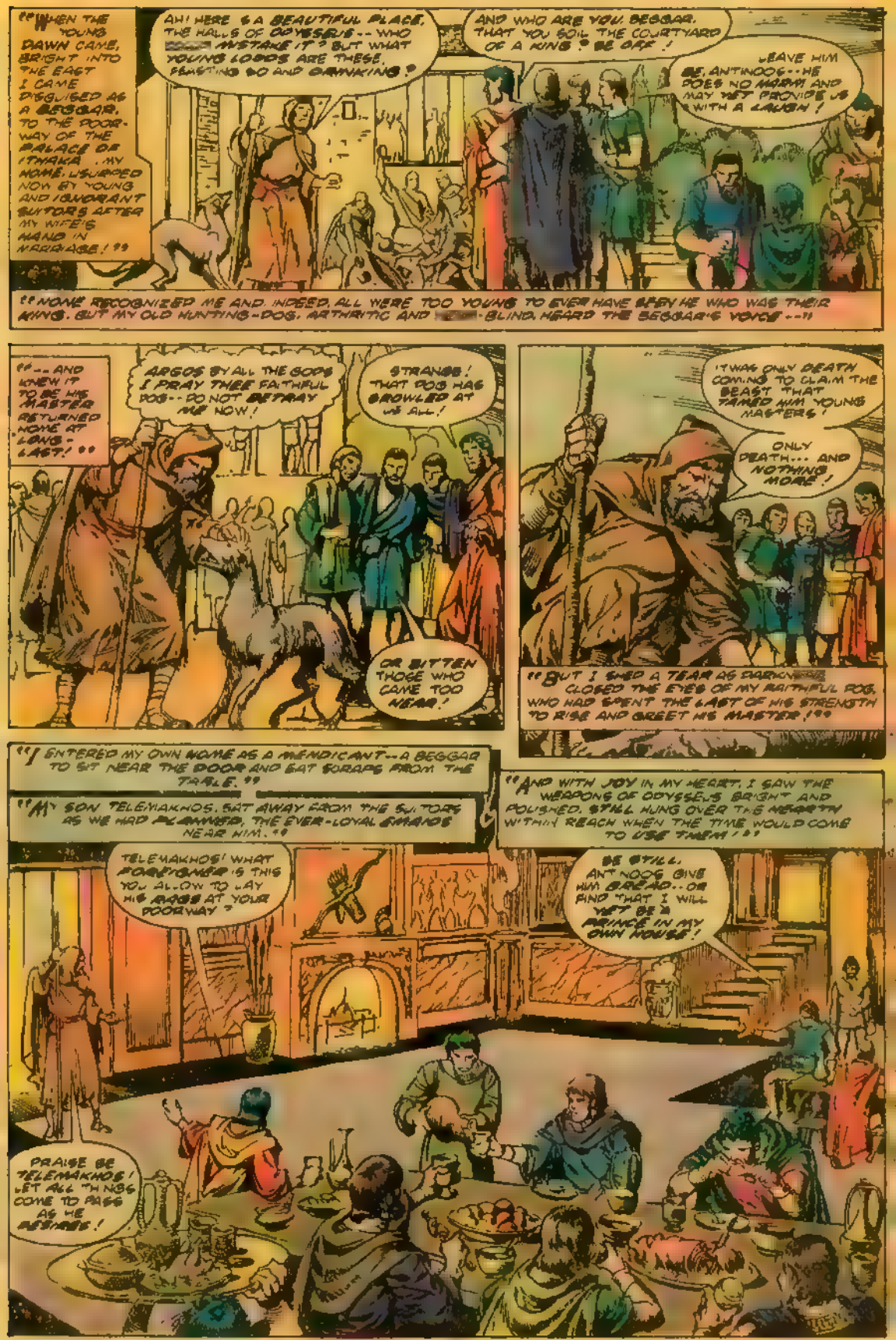

"...BUT I KEPT IT BACK, AND SPUN A TALE OF WAR TO EXPLAIN MY PRESENCE, CALLING MYSELF BY ANOTHER NAME SO THAT NONE MIGHT KNOW ODYSSEUS WAS HOME TO CLAIM HIS KINGDOM."
AH, ITHAKA! YES--I BELIEVE I LEARNED THE NAME IN CRETE, AND HERE I AM NOW, MY FORTUNE WITH ME--
--CAST ASHORE BY CRAFTY PHAEACIAN SAILORS!


"BUT NO SOONER HAD THE LIE PASSED FROM MY LIPS WHEN..."
ODYSSEUS MY ODYSSEUS! SHARP YOU ARE, AND GUILEFUL AS A SNAKE! YOU CHAMELEON! YOU BOTTOMLESS BAG OF TRICKS!
BY ALL THAT'S HOLY! ATHENA!! FORGIVE ME, GODDESS!

FORGIVE YOU, MY HERO GLADLY! FOR OF ALL WHO SET SWORD ON SWORD AT TROY, YOU WERE BELOVED OF MYSELF ABOVE ALL!
BUT PALLAS ATHENA COMES TO OFFER YOU YET ANOTHER DECEPTION. FOR WE ARE MUCH ALIKE WE TWO--ONEN TO PLOTS AND STORY-TELLING!
MY MESSAGE IS THIS, GREAT CAPTAIN: DANGER AWAITS YOU IN YOUR VERY HOME! THE SUITORS OF PENELOPE WOULD NOT TAKE KINDLY TO A RETURNING HUSBAND, NOT EVEN BE HE KING!
SO I SHALL TRANSFORM YOU SO NOT A SOUL WILL KNOW YOU..NEITHER WIFE NOR SON. NOR YOUR ENEMIES!
GO FORTH AND FIND THOSE LOYAL TO THE KING WHO LEFT ITHAKA TWENTY YEARS PAST! JOIN YOUR SON, TELEMAKHOS..
..AND COLD EARTH WILL TAKE IN HER EMBRACE A MAN OR TWO... IF THOU ART THE SAME ODYSSEUS I KNEW OF OLD!
I AM HE, GREAT GODDESS, I SWEAR IT! AND THE MEN WHO DEFILE MY HOUSE WILL KNOW IT TOO, BEFORE THE NEXT RISING OF THE MOON!

"I BEGAN TO DO AS THE GODDESS HAD ME LOOKING EAST FOR MY FAITHFUL SWINEHERD, EUMAIOS ON THE LANDS I HAD OWNED HIM YEARS BEFORE."
SWINEHERD GA... OFF MY DOGS--LEST THEY LAY A MURDER AT THEIR MASTER'S FEET!
DOWN YOU HOUNDS OF HELL! BACK TO YOUR KENNELS!
YOU MIGHT HAVE GOT A WANDERING MAN TWO SHAKES MORE AND IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A PRETTY MESS FOR ME!
BUT COME TO THE HUT! YOU'RE A WANDERER--AND YOU MUST EAT AND DRINK SOME WINE AND TELL ME IF YOU'VE HEARD NEWS OF MY MASTER--
--THE GREAT ODYSSEUS TRUE KING THAT HE WAS!
"I HEARD EUMAIOS, AND KNEW I HAD FOUND THE FIRST OF THOSE WHO WOULD FAITHFULLY STAND WITH ME."
"AND IT WAS SOME DAYS LATER THAT..."
YOU HAVE A WELCOME, SWINEHERD... WITH A DIFFERENT WELCOME THEN THE DOGS GAVE ME!
YOU THEY KNEW NOT, STRANGER, AND THIS ONE THEY KNOW BEST OF ALL! IT'S THE PRINCE OF THIS LAND WHO COMES!
I GREET THEE TELEMAKHOS--SON OF ODYSSEUS!
AND I GREET YOU FAITHFUL ONE! I HAVE SAILED FAR IN SEARCH OF NEWS OF MY FATHER EUMAIOS--AND THOUGH MANY ARE THEY WHO REMEMBER HIM--
--NONE CAN SAY WHETHER HE YET LIVES!
HE--HE DOES MY LORD!
AND NOW DO YOU KNOW THAT STRANGER?
MIND HIM NOT, MY PRINCE! HE IS OLD AND FEEBLE IN HIS THOUGHTS--AND HAS TRIED TO CONVINCE ME THAT OUR KING YET LIVES!
BUT NEWS OF YOUR HOME! COMMING MUST BE SPREAD TO YOUR MOTHER AND THOSE WHO WISH NOT HARM YOU BY HEARING OF IT! IT WILL GO, AND--

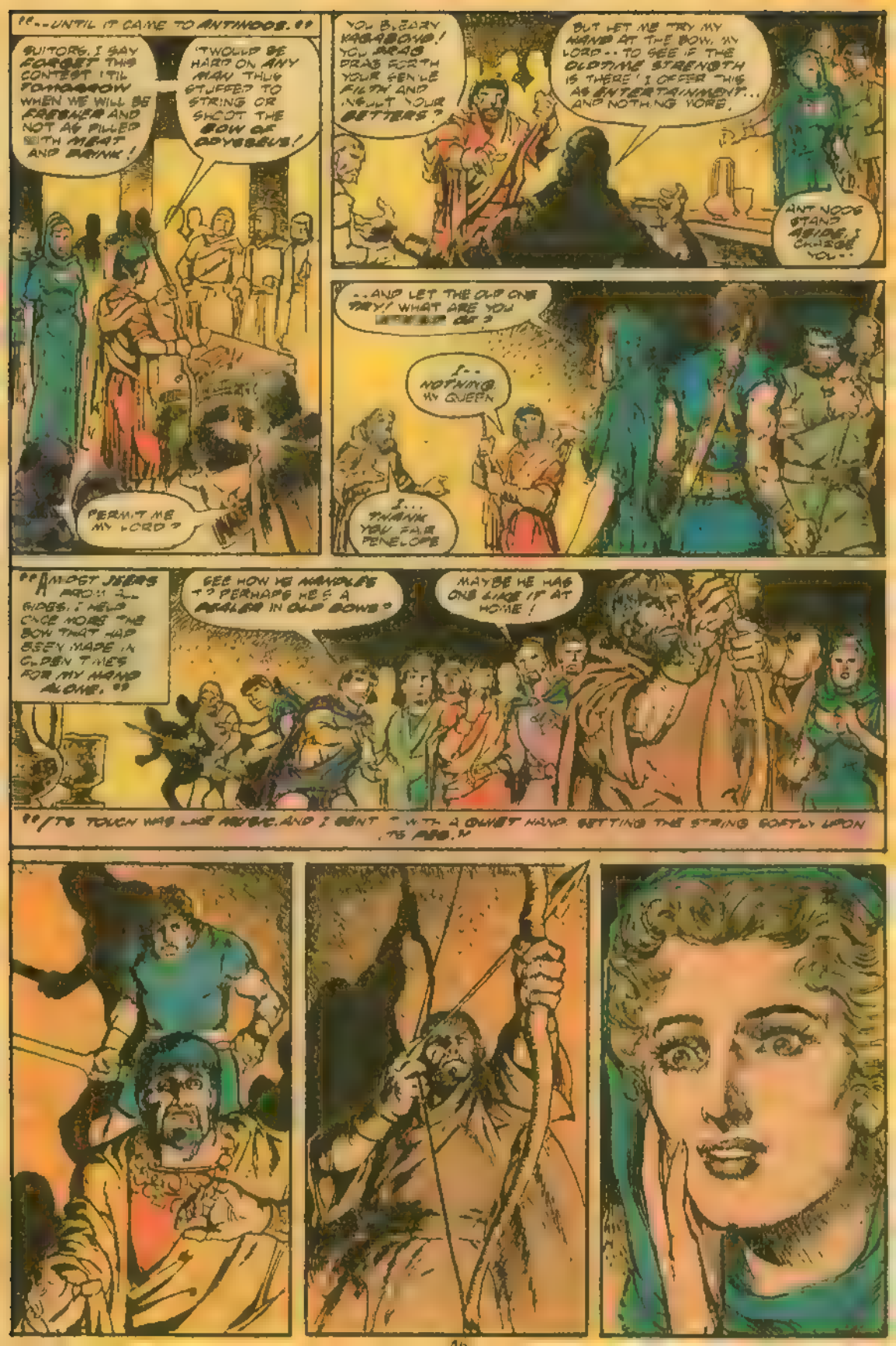
NOW, ODYSSEUS! REVEAL THYSELF!
EUMAIOS, YOU WILL STAY!
BY ALL THE GODS! THE STRANGER TRANSFORMS! HIS CLOAK IS NEW--EVEN HIS SKIN!
HE IS ONE OF THE GODS!!
OR A DEMON SENT TO SLAY ME, AND STEAL MY FATHER'S THRONE!
NO GOD, EUMAIOS, AND NO DEMON! I AM HE YOU HAVE PRAYED FOR, MASTER AND FATHER--
--AND GREY-EYED ATHENA HAS ANSWERED YOUR PRAYERS! RISE AND FEAR ME NOT--
--FOR I AM ODYSSEUS, HOME AT LAST."
IT IS MY FATHER! NOW LET THE SUITORS BEWARE!
THE GODS BE PRAISED!
"AND, WHEN THE MOMENT OF REVELATION HAD PASSED."
ZEUS AND ATHENA STAND WITH US. MY SON AND THE TIME FOR RECKONING IS AT HAND!
LISTEN WELL TO MY PLAN, AND DO AS I BID AND, WHEN THE TEST COMES, WE WILL ACT AS ONE MIND WITH A COMMON GOAL--
REVENGE!

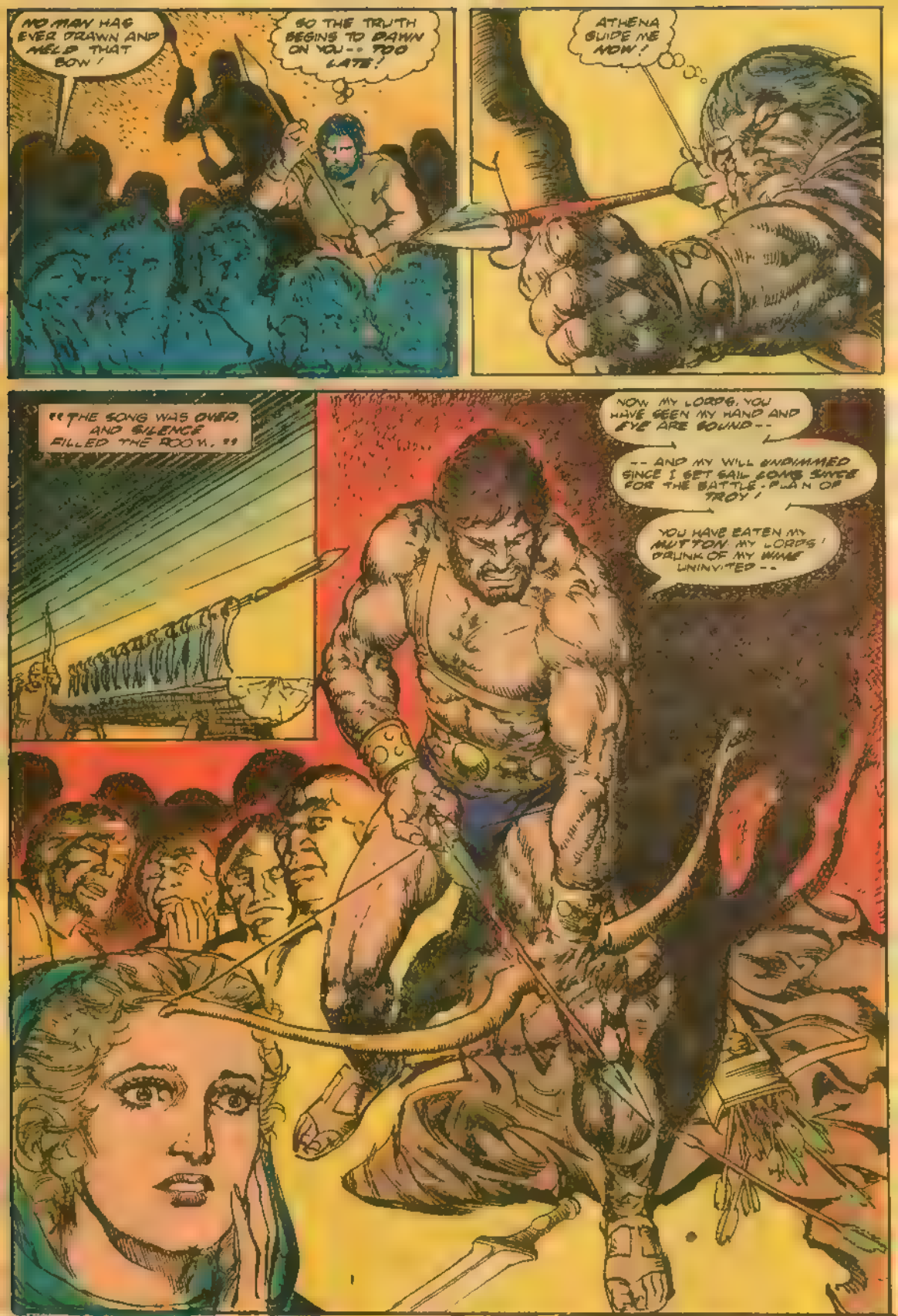

"WHEN THE YOUNG DAWN CAME, BRIGHT INTO THE EAST I CAME DISGUISED AS A BEGGAR, TO THE DOORWAY OF THE PALACE OF ITHAKA, MY HOME, USURPED NOW BY YOUNG AND IGNORANT SUITORS AFTER MY WIFE'S HAND IN MARRIAGE!"
AH! HERE IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE, THE HALLS OF ODYSSEUS -- WHO [redacted] MISTAKE IT? BUT WHAT YOUNG LOOS ARE THESE, FEASTING SO AND DRINKING?
AND WHO ARE YOU, BEGGAR, THAT YOU SOIL THE COURTYARD OF A KING? BE OFF!
LEAVE HIM BE, ANTINOOS -- HE DOES NO HARM! AND MAY YET PROVIDE US WITH A LAUGH!
"NONE RECOGNIZED ME AND, INDEED, ALL WERE TOO YOUNG TO EVER HAVE SEEN HE WHO WAS THEIR KING. BUT MY OLD HUNTING-DOG, ARTHRITIC AND [redacted]-BLIND, HEARD THE BEGGAR'S VOICE --"
"-- AND KNEW IT TO BE HIS MASTER RETURNED HOME AT LONG-LAST!"
ARGOS! BY ALL THE GODS I PRAY THEE FAITHFUL DOG -- DO NOT BETRAY ME NOW!
STRANGE! THAT DOG HAS GROWLED AT US ALL!
OR BITTEN THOSE WHO CAME TOO NEAR!
"BUT I SHED A TEAR AS DARKN[redacted] CLOSED THE EYES OF MY FAITHFUL DOG, WHO HAD SPENT THE LAST OF HIS STRENGTH TO RISE AND GREET HIS MASTER!"
IT WAS ONLY DEATH COMING TO CLAIM THE BEAST THAT TAMED HIM YOUNG MASTER!
ONLY DEATH... AND NOTHING MORE!
"I ENTERED MY OWN HOME AS A MENDICANT -- A BEGGAR TO SIT NEAR THE DOOR AND EAT SCRAPS FROM THE TABLE."
"MY SON TELEMAKHOS, SAT AWAY FROM THE SUITORS AS WE HAD PLANNED, THE EVER-LOYAL SWINEHERD NEAR HIM."
"AND WITH JOY IN MY HEART, I SAW THE WEAPONS OF ODYSSEUS BRIGHT AND POLISHED, STILL HUNG OVER THE HEARTH WITHIN REACH WHEN THE TIME WOULD COME TO USE THEM!"
TELEMAKHOS! WHAT DISCOURTESY IS THIS YOU ALLOW TO LAY HIS RAGS AT YOUR DOORWAY?
BE STILL, ANTINOOS! GIVE HIM BREAD -- OR FIND THAT I WILL YET BE A PRINCE IN MY OWN HOUSE!
PRAISE BE TELEMAKHOS! LET ALL THINGS COME TO PASS AS HE DESIRES!

"I NEXT REGARDED OR THESE MEN, AS ATHENA HAD COUNSELLED THAT I MIGHT LEARN WHETHER ALL SHOULD DIE OR WHETHER SOME SHARED GOOD WITH THEM AND SHOULD BE SPARED."
ALMS, YOUNG GENTLEMEN? A LOAF OF BREAD FOR AN OLD SOLDIER?
AWAY! AN OLD BEGGAR. MORE THAN LIKELY BEGONE.
OH PEACE, ANTINOOS. THE MAN DOES NO HARM!
PEACE ALL! THE QUEEN!
"IT HAD BEEN TWENTY YEARS SINCE LAST I HAD SET EYES ON MY WIFE'S BEAUTY. TWENTY YEARS!"
REST! DOWN BEGGAR! NOW WITH THE REST OF US!
ARE YOU DEAF, MAN?
I BUT BADE THE MAN KNEEL GOOD QUEEN--AS IS YOUR DUE! HE IS TOO INSOLENT TO LISTEN WHEN A GENTLEMAN SPEAKS--
"BUT THE QUEEN'S WORDS ANGERED THE COWARD AND HE SET ON ME TO DOUSE THE FLAME IN HIS HEART."
THE MAN IS MAD NOT TO HEED ME!
WHAT MISCHIEF HAVE YOU SET LOOSE IN MY HOME NOW, ANTINOOS? WHY DO YOU NOT GO HOME AND COURT A YOUNGER AND PRETTIER ONE WHO WOULD HAVE YOU?
..THEN HE MUST BE MADE TO LISTEN!!
"THE RAGE IN MY SHOULDER BROUGHT ME BACK FROM MEMORY.."
"AND HAD THE BLOW LANDED AS SO THAT MY EYES COULD BUT MEET THEIRS ALL THOSE MEN IN MY HOUSE WOULD KNOW BEFORE I PLANNED--"
OKLAN MY LORD! THE TIME IS NOT YET!
"..THAT THEIR KING HAD RETURNED TO CLAIM HIS OWN!"

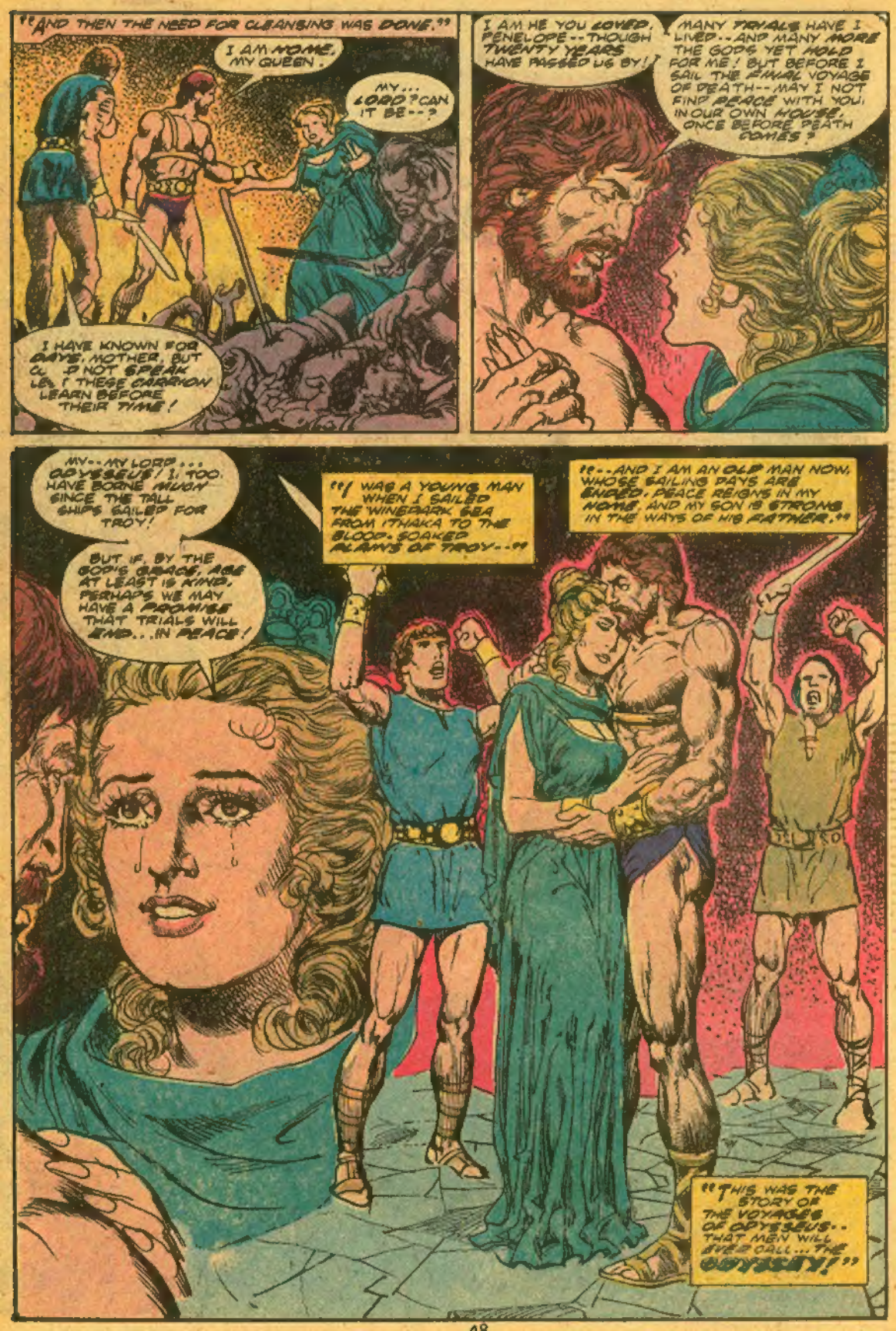
WHY TORMENT AN OLD BEGGAR, MY LORDS? SURELY--
SILENCE, SWINEHERD! IF HE IS TO EAT OF OUR FOOD, IT IS ONLY FITTING HE PAY FOR IT BY PROVIDING US WITH ENTERTAINMENT!
YOU CLAIM TO BE AN AGED SOLDIER, BEGGAR. THEN A WARRIOR'S GAME SHOULD NOT BE STRANGE TO YOU! YOU WILL WRESTLE IROS HERE--ALSO OLD, BUT NEVER BEATEN!
I--AS YOU WISH, MY LORD!
"THE EYES OF THE QUEEN MET MINE FOR AN INSTANT--"
"--AND WHERE I HAD FIRST THOUGHT TO LOSE TO THE FELLOW, I WAS NOW DETERMINED TO WIN!"
AN OLD GOAT CIRCLES LIKE A CHAMPION, ANTINOOS!
IROS STRONG! IROS KILL!
I AM OLD, IROS--BUT NOT TOO OLD FOR THE LIKES OF YOU!
HERE IS IROS, MY LORDS! DO WITH HIM AS YOU WILL!
BY THE GODS--THE OLD FELLOW HAD MUSCLE HIDDEN BENEATH THOSE RAGS!
"IF ANY SUSPECTED, THEY SHOWED IT NOT--"
"--BUT MY THOUGHT WAS THAT NONE KNEW, BUT ALL WERE AWED BY MY SHOW OF STRENGTH!
"AND NONE HAD NOTICED DURING THE FRAY THAT THEIR WEAPONS HAD BEEN QUIETLY REMOVED FROM THEIR PLACES AT THE TABLE--"
"CHIEFLY ANTINOOS, THEIR LEADER AND HE WHOM I HAD MARKED FOR AN EARLY DEATH!"
"--BY TWO AMPLE-MADORNED FIGURES, MY SON AND MY FAITHFUL SWINEHERD. THE BOARD WAS SET AT LAST"

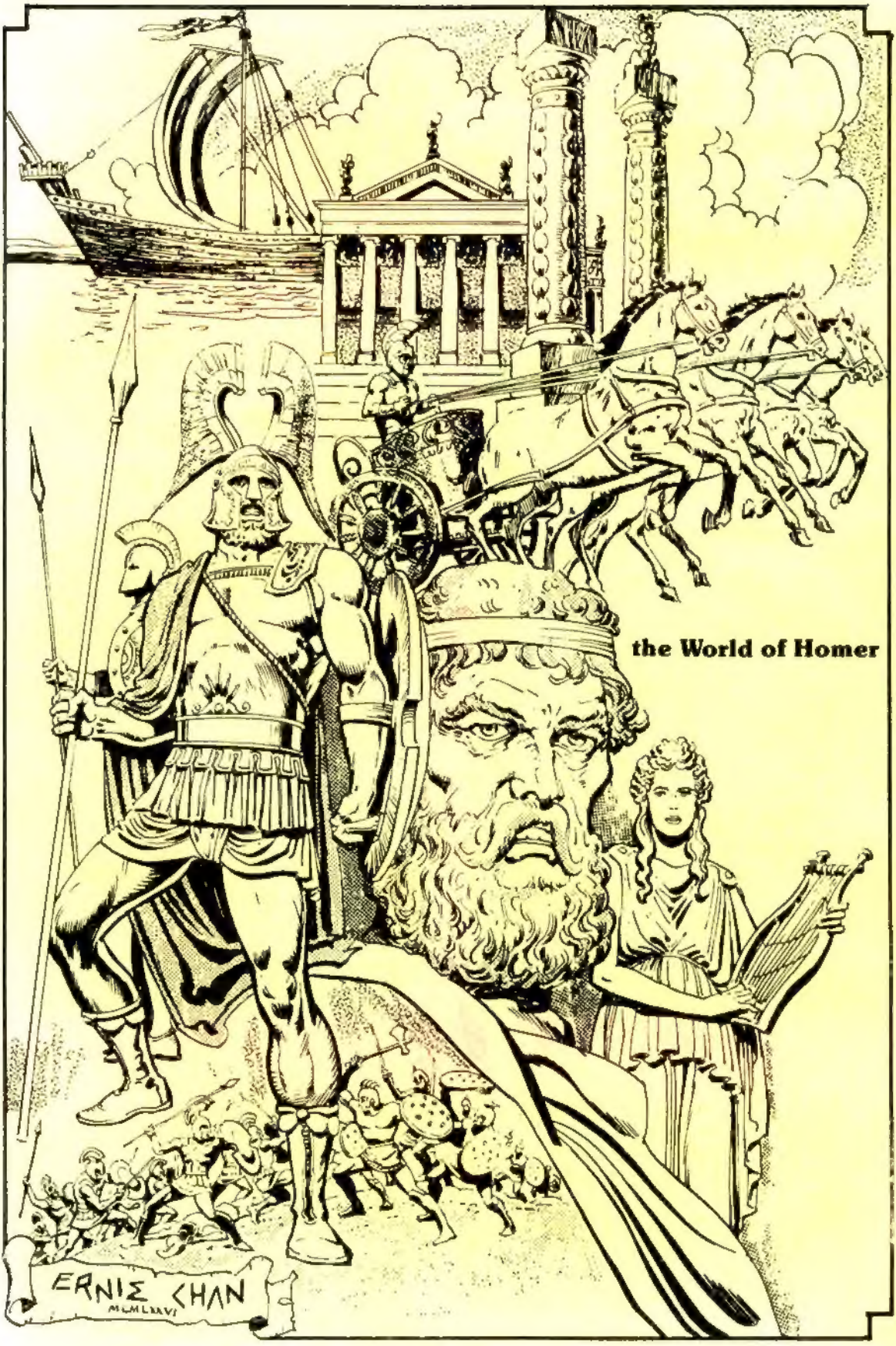
MY LORDS HEAR ME · I HAVE GROWN WEARY OF THIS END-LESS FEASTING IN MY HOUSE ! HERE IS THE FAR-FAMED BOW OF ODYSSEUS !
HE WHO CAN BEND AND STRING IT AND SEND AN ARROW THROUGH TEN AXE-HEADS, TWELVE IN A LINE · · WILL BECOME MY HUSBAND, AND ALL I OWN WILL BE HIS !
"THE HALL GREW HUSHED SERVANTS RAN TO SET THE TARGET . . "
"· · AND THE SUITORS BEGAN THE CONTEST GREED FOR MY LADY'S RICHES EATING AT EACH OTHER'S HEART ! "
ONE AT A TIME ! ODYSSEUS FIRST !
I CANNOT EVEN BEND THE BOW TO STRING IT, ANTINOOS ! I RENOUNCE MY CLAIM ON PENELOPE'S HAND !
THEN LET THE OTHERS TRY · · THOSE WHO DARE !
"RAGE BURNED IN THE SUITORS' HEARTS FOR ONE AFTER ANOTHER, ALL FAILED TO STRING · · NAY, EVEN TO BEND · · THAT MIGHTY BOW OF WAR . "
"AND THEY GAVE UP, SOME IN ANGER SOME IN RESIGNATION PASSING THE BOW DOWN THE GREEDY LINE · · "


"...UNTIL IT CAME TO ANTINOOS."
SUITORS, I SAY FORGET THIS CONTEST 'TIL TOMORROW WHEN WE WILL BE FRESHER AND NOT AS FILLED WITH MEAT AND WINE!
'TWOULD BE HARD ON ANY MAN THUS STUFFED TO STRING OR SHOOT THE BOW OF ODYSSEUS!
PERMIT ME, MY LORD?
YOU BLEARY VAGABOND! YOU DRAG DRAB FORTH YOUR GENTLE FILTH AND INSULT YOUR BETTERS?
BUT LET ME TRY MY HAND AT THE BOW, MY LORD.. TO SEE IF THE OLDTIME STRENGTH IS THERE! I OFFER THIS AS ENTERTAINMENT... AND NOTHING MORE.
ANT NOOS STAND ASIDE, I CHOOSE YOU..
..AND LET THE OLD ONE TRY! WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?
I... NOTHING, MY QUEEN
I... THANK YOU FAIR PENELOPE
"ALMOST JEERS FROM ALL SIDES, I HELD ONCE MORE THE BOW THAT HAD BEEN MADE IN GLORIOUS TIMES FOR MY HAND ALONE."
SEE HOW HE HANDLES IT? PERHAPS HE'S A DEALER IN OLD BOWS
MAYBE HE HAS ONE LIKE IT AT HOME!
"ITS TOUCH WAS LIKE MUSIC. AND I SENT IT WITH A QUIET HAND, SETTING THE STRING SOFTLY UPON ITS ARM."


NO MAN HAS EVER DRAWN AND HELD THAT BOW!
SO THE TRUTH BEGINS TO DAWN ON YOU -- TOO LATE!
ATHENA GUIDE ME NOW!
"THE SONG WAS OVER, AND SILENCE FILLED THE ROOM."
NOW MY LORDS, YOU HAVE SEEN MY HAND AND EYE ARE BOUND --
-- AND MY WILL UNDIMMED SINCE I SET SAIL SOME SIXTEEN FOR THE BATTLE-PLAN OF TROY!
YOU HAVE EATEN MY MUTTON, MY LORDS! DRUNK OF MY WINE UNINVITED --

"THE WAR-BOW SANG OUT AGAIN AND YET AGAIN -- IN HARMONY WITH THE FLASHING SWORD OF TELEMAKHOS AND DRIVING SPEAR OF EUMAIOS!"
"SUITOR AFTER SUITOR SCREAMED AND DIED, THEIR BLOOD RUNNING WITH THE WINE THEY'D STOLEN FROM MY TABLE, FALLING ON THE MEAT THEY'D TAKEN FROM MY FIELDS!"
"THEY DIED, DESERVING DEATH, BEGGING TO BE SPARED, BUT THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE WAS HOME -- AND THE HALLS NEEDED CLEANSING OF THE GREED OF MEN!"
...AND THE HOUR HAS COME TO PAY THE PRICE OF GAMES... WITH BLOOD!!
EEYAGGHH!
IT IS ME! IT IS ODYSSEUS!


"AND THEN THE NEED FOR CLEANSING WAS DONE."
I AM HOME, MY QUEEN.
MY... LORD? CAN IT BE--?
I HAVE KNOWN FOR DAYS, MOTHER, BUT WE DID NOT SPEAK LEST THESE CARRION LEARN BEFORE THEIR TIME!
I AM HE YOU LOVED, PENELOPE--THOUGH TWENTY YEARS HAVE PASSED US BY!
MANY TRIALS HAVE I LIVED--AND MANY MORE THE GODS YET HOLD FOR ME! BUT BEFORE I SAIL THE FINAL VOYAGE OF DEATH--MAY I NOT FIND PEACE WITH YOU, IN OUR OWN HOUSE, ONCE BEFORE DEATH COMES?
MY--MY LORD... ODYSSEUS! I, TOO, HAVE BORNE MUCH SINCE THE TALL SHIPS SAILED FOR TROY!
BUT IF, BY THE GOD'S GRACE, AGE AT LEAST IS KIND, PERHAPS WE MAY HAVE A PROMISE THAT TRIALS WILL END...IN PEACE!
"I WAS A YOUNG MAN WHEN I SAILED THE WINEDARK SEA FROM ITHAKA TO THE BLOOD-SOAKED PLAINS OF TROY--"
"--AND I AM AN OLD MAN NOW, WHOSE SAILING DAYS ARE ENDED. PEACE REIGNS IN MY HOME, AND MY SON IS STRONG IN THE WAYS OF HIS FATHER."
"THIS WAS THE STORY OF THE VOYAGES OF ODYSSEUS--THAT MEN WILL EVER CALL... THE ODYSSEY!"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